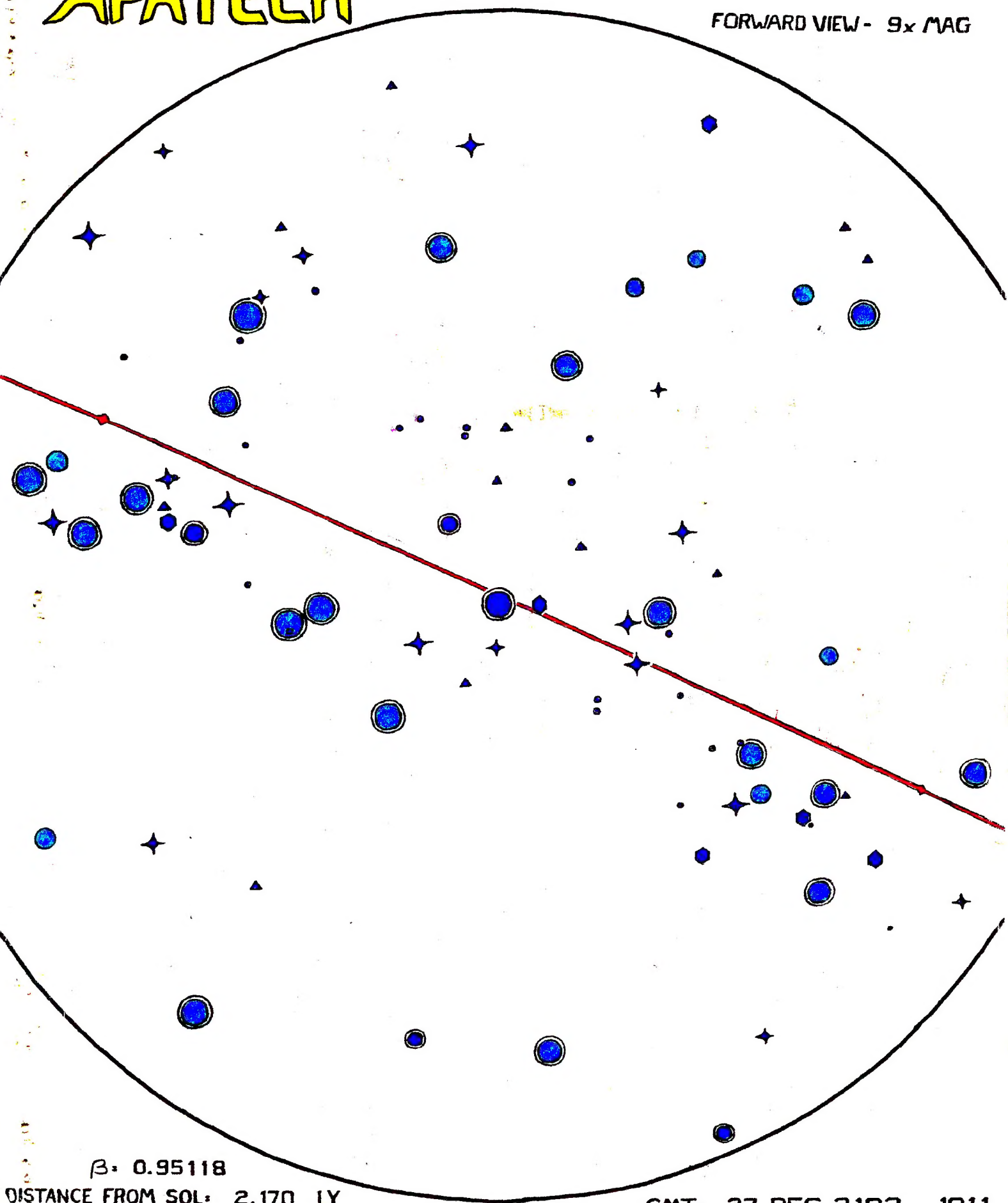


GSS APATECH

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The Amateur Press Association for and by
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Shalmaneser {Emergency Editor}: Tullio Proni, same as above.
.....

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PAGE COUNT

84

The next deadline is Friday, June 6 {for X-Con weekend}

The Copy Count is 35

YOUR ACCOUNT BEFORE POSTAGE IS \$ 4.99

THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DROPPED: Bill Colsher {unless he postmails}

Those who owe pages {or will be dropped next ish}: Alice {2},
Jamie {2}, Steve {2}, Renee {2}, Gordon {2}, Kevin {2},
Mary Lynn {1}, Marty {2}

Those who owe money: Mary Lynn, Marty

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PPA

AN OFFICIAL MEMO FROM THE CHAIR

If you are wondering why you or some of the others haven't been dropped and forced to postmail it is because the last issue was a month late and I felt it only fair to give a grace period of 1 issue to make up for the the lack of time to prepare. Not that any of you should have been in danger of being dropped (4 of you were Tsk Tsk) but I didn't think that anyone should be penalized for my tardiness.

NEW PEOPLE: I'd like to welcome four new people to the apa. They are: Mary Lynn Skirvin, Marty Franz, Kevin Dunn, and Kip Williams. Mary Lynn most of you know from her techie songbook, artwork, stuffed animals, and just generally being a nice person. Marty Franz, while not a member of GT, is a techie type and works for IBM {insert sneer}. He's also an old friend of mine and will send his stamps right away {won't you, Marty?} He hasn't anything in this issue but has promised to postmail. Neither Kip nor Kevin are members of GT or are technically inclined but here I'm exerting executive privilege {hell, there have to be SOME privileges to this job} and allowing them to join. And they're good friends of Misha's, Gordon's, and mine. Kevin hasn't anything in this ish but he gave me money ~~and I'm~~ ~~and I'm~~ and that's good enough for me to start. Besides, I know that this apa is heavily dominated by the higher technologies in its use of computers for printing, justifying, etc., and I believe that Kip Williams has found the ultimate in word-processing. I think that you'll like the additions to the roster. I certainly do.

THE VOTING RESULTS: After counting the ballots and scanning all the zines for votes, I found that barely 10 people voted. Sad, but if you want to vote you must get your ballots to me. The name change to APA-RATUS went down in resounding defeat { 9 to 1.} Eight people voted for a leniency period and two against {two people didn't vote on the last two issues}. The length of the leniency period came out to be 8.4 days. FNORD So from this issue on till I get voted into retirement the grace period will be a week plus one day after the deadline. FNORD

YEAR END BOOKEEPING: As you well know, all of you donated \$1 to APA-TECH to finance printing of the covers and the TIMES, the masters, postcards to inform people that they owe money, postage for sending copies to honorary members {usually those people who aren't members who contribute covers}, etc. These dues are payable when you join and then every year thereafter that you are a member, on that month that is the anniversary of your joining. What I did was to take that portion of your dues that was applicable for the past year, from June 1978 to June 1979 {from 100% to 1/6 or 16.7%} and added them up. It came to \$16.31. I then subtracted the above-mentioned expenses, \$10.77, and came up with a surplus of \$5.54, which won't quite pay for a extra big stapler but it'll have to do. Our small stapler can no longer handle the apa as large as it has grown {as most of you have noticed, the apa has already outgrown the stapler. You probably lost the back pages of the last issue soon after you got it.}

P.S. I went to the stores today to price out a heavy duty stapler and I was shocked. The cheapest I could find was \$37.50 {It was really neat, though, and could handle 3 different sizes of staples.} Accordingly, I'm going to have to charge each of you \$1 extra dues to cover the cost of purchasing one. It won't be enough but I can wait for a couple of months to get the remainder. I will buy it in time for the next issue unless I hear an alternative or a strong objection and it will

*why not amortize it over
next couple of years,
& refund us extra dues*

become property of the apa, falling into the hands of the next GTB if I ever get ousted.

NOTES: I can get xerox reproduction for \$.05 a page but that's duplicated on only one side. The next best is \$.067 a side with the availability of duplication on both sides but no price break (\$.134 a page). I'll keep looking but the prospects of finding a better deal are growing dimmer. Best to get an agent in Chicago (Dick, how do you feel about that?)

I still need covers. I've got none! Whatsamatta with you guys? I certainly saw a lot of mesklinites and bandersnatchii. I know someone(s) can generate me one measly cover for a back-cover!.

The next issue will ^{be} our first anniversary issue so I hope it will be a special one. I'd like all of our members, past and present ~~and/future~~ to contribute. I also need a nice front and back cover (see above) for it. And I will try to put together an index of the first 6 issues. Till June, when it will be APA-TECH's first birthday, I hope that all of you enjoy good health and much happiness in your endeavors. Hot Jets!

GTB

The Quintessential Singularity

21 March 1980
for APA-TECH 6₁₀

being a journal of complex, imaginary, and irrational studies
issued by the Department of Public Information, Ossa-on-Pelion, Inc.
1220 Lenape Way, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076
Gregory Ruffa, Department Head and Space Traffic Controller
new site of The Center for Spaced Research:
Apt. 4K, Hemlock House, Carlton Village, Hamburg, N.J. 07419

It's certainly been a busy and anxious two months -- let's get caught up! On the night of January 15th, I loaded up the last of my goods and bade a long-awaited adieu to Chambana (more than four years in one place and I get itchy). I departed in a 14-foot U-Haul with manual transmission (which I'd just had two lessons in using) and got onto the Interstate Highway System. Full out on the straightaway, this baby could do all of 50 on level ground, so 25 hours later, I arrived home fresh as a damp chewing-gum wrapper.

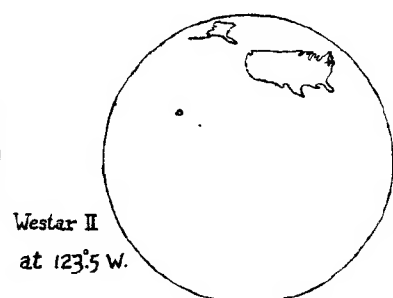
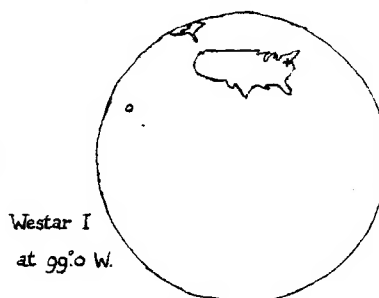
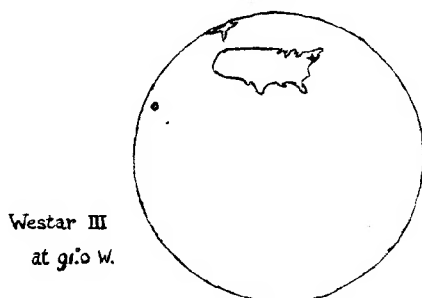
Since my barrage of correspondence to prospective employers had come to naught back in Illinois, I had to sit down once again and implore several more total strangers to let me come mooch off them. After only six weeks and a couple dozen more letters, nothing else happened this time, either. Just as I had given up starting in some reasonably astronomical sort of work and was writing to employment agencies in New York for programming jobs, an uncle of mine found a classified indicating that Western Union sought assistance.

It seemed that, rather than sending candygrams to Callisto, they required an orbital dynamicist and a spacecraft systems engineer. Well, I was a tiny bit late for the dynamicist position, but starting last Monday (the 17th), I became a spacecraft controller for WU. The function of the Glenwood Earth Station in Vernon, N.J. is essentially "babysitting"; we're there to see to it that their three Westar communications satellites don't swallow drain cleaner or play with sharp things or wander away and run into an old Cosmos or something. Most of the time, the staff does "nothing": they're supposed to do nothing, WU likes it that way! I've already learned a lot of what needs to be done routinely. Now I just have to learn what to do when something goes wo r nng.

The hours are weird and wonderful: there are twelve-hour shifts for, alternately, three or four days a week. This first week, I had regular working hours; next week, I will work from noon to midnight from Wednesday to Saturday. So I have the next few days off (during which I am composing all this).

Today I just applied for a one-bedroom studio apartment about 10 miles from work. It is in one of those so-called "apartment villages" (pleasantly middle-class) and seems to offer a number of comfortable features. I suppose I'm paying extra for all that, but I feel it is worth being spared a daily 60-mile commute from where I am writing this. On my days off, though, I'll usually be back here in my folks' house where I have reconstructed my study. Now I can live in two places at once! (when I'm not anywhere at all??)

There's a Westar near you!



I'll ply you folks with technical details about the Glenwood installation next time; I'm still reading the manuals and haven't sorted out everything in my own head yet (remember also that I don't know much of anything about electronics -- don't hiss so loudly!).

Instead I'll toss in some reviews before lunging into a couple of astronomical tirades. For me this month, there were a couple of movies, a tome, and a convention. Sorry to say I've had better months...

I saw the movie first and then read the interview*with director Donen a week later; I could hardly believe he was talking about the same movie. I think somebody had some very nice ideas in SATURN 3, but forgot to glue them together. Once again, Hollywood moviemakers are getting too engrossed in pretty effects and forgetting that science fiction, like any other literature, is supposed to tell a story. I was sort of able to find a story in here, but this movie could have used a good deal more thought and about another half-hour of exposition. (Why does Hollywood seem so afraid of explaining plot and motivation? Perhaps because explanations don't fly around on the screen?) I won't make any comments on acting: name any SF film where the characterization and delivery impressed you! (At the moment, only Dern in Silent Running comes to my mind.) I'll give these folks a few points for a few nice ideas, take away a couple for coming asymptotically close to being Alien, put one back for not actually turning into Alien, and neither add nor detract for any other aspects. This movie was, for me, easily better than The Black Hole or The Shape of Things to Come and about as good as This Island Earth from back in the Fifties (that movie had a really good story going for the first two-thirds and then tossed everything over the rail. Pity.)

Like so many classics, I have yet to read Brave New World, but now I will have to after seeing the TV movie. I'm really curious as to whether Huxley's presentation was as dry as the NBC production. I thought the film was a quite straightforward relation of a story utterly devoid of drama. I failed to sense any tension whatsoever; the well-oiled, smoothly efficient social machine of His Fordship's ground its victims under and you felt absolutely nothing... In many ways, Ellison's Repent, Harlequin tells the same story, but there you really feel sorrow over Marm's destruction and, at the end, some hope that he may just have begun a change in the scheme of things nevertheless.

I recently finished Before The Golden Age, Asimov's autobiographical-anthological prelude to The Early Asimov. This is a 900-plus-page collection of stories that particularly impressed The Good Doctor during his youth in the Thirties. Personally, I felt most of the stories to be merely of historical interest; by the time I got to about page 650, I had to thank Heaven for Weinbaum and Campbell. Besides their works and Rocklynne's The Men and the Mirror, which is a classic "puzzle story", I found little else especially memorable. One story I did find incidentally amusing was one in which an astrophysicist named Jimmy Carter saves the world from a moon-sized hunk of antimatter. (Who knows? Our Jimmy is just full of surprises...)

Since I was in the neighborhood, I decided to pop in on Lunacon last weekend. I am coming to the conclusion that one's enjoyment of a convention depends mostly on who you know there. Possibly around 500 total strangers were present. The Lunarians of New York seem to run a very straight con, since most of the activities were either talk or movies. I imagine most of the fun was upstairs in the rooms. I mainly went to see Larry Niven, since he

will be at Whatcon. He is not the most dynamic and spontaneous of speakers; his Guest-of-Honor speech was delivered from a computer-edited set of pages. My feeling is that he is probably more interesting in private or among small groups. It doesn't seem to pay to have read everything he's written and to follow the space "program" (such as it is) too closely, since you then won't hear him say anything new. I still look forward to seeing him in May. Otherwise, I don't feel I got a whole lot for my \$13 membership at the door. (To the crew of GT, a word of warning: the film program was pushing a thing called King Dinosaur as the worst SF film ever made. Plot summary -- a new planet, dubbed Nova, parked itself in an orbit near Earth; much time is spent describing steps taken to build a ship and assemble a crew of two female and two male scientists. These couples go on a camping trip to the new planet, which looks just like a forest somewhere in the Rockies. While one couple stays back at the ship and makes eyes at each other, the other two take a canoe trip to a mysterious island inhabited by stock footage of a giant lizard fight you've seen in an old Buck Rogers serial. This couple gets trapped in a cave, blocked by one of the lizards who is apparently trying to sneeze them to death. The other couple hears noises coming from the island and goes to help, bringing along the ship's portable atomic battery. Before they arrive, the lizards resume killing each other and the entrapped duo escapes. But aid has arrived and they all set the timer to detonate the battery (this is all before TMI, folks...). Now they have to row like mad for the ship! Of course, they make it back to shore and take cover before the island vanishes into stock footage of Alamogordo. One of our heroes declares that Nova is now safe for colonization. The End. I don't know if this flick is the worst, but it sure is the most boring I've ever seen. Have you ever seen Robot Monster?)

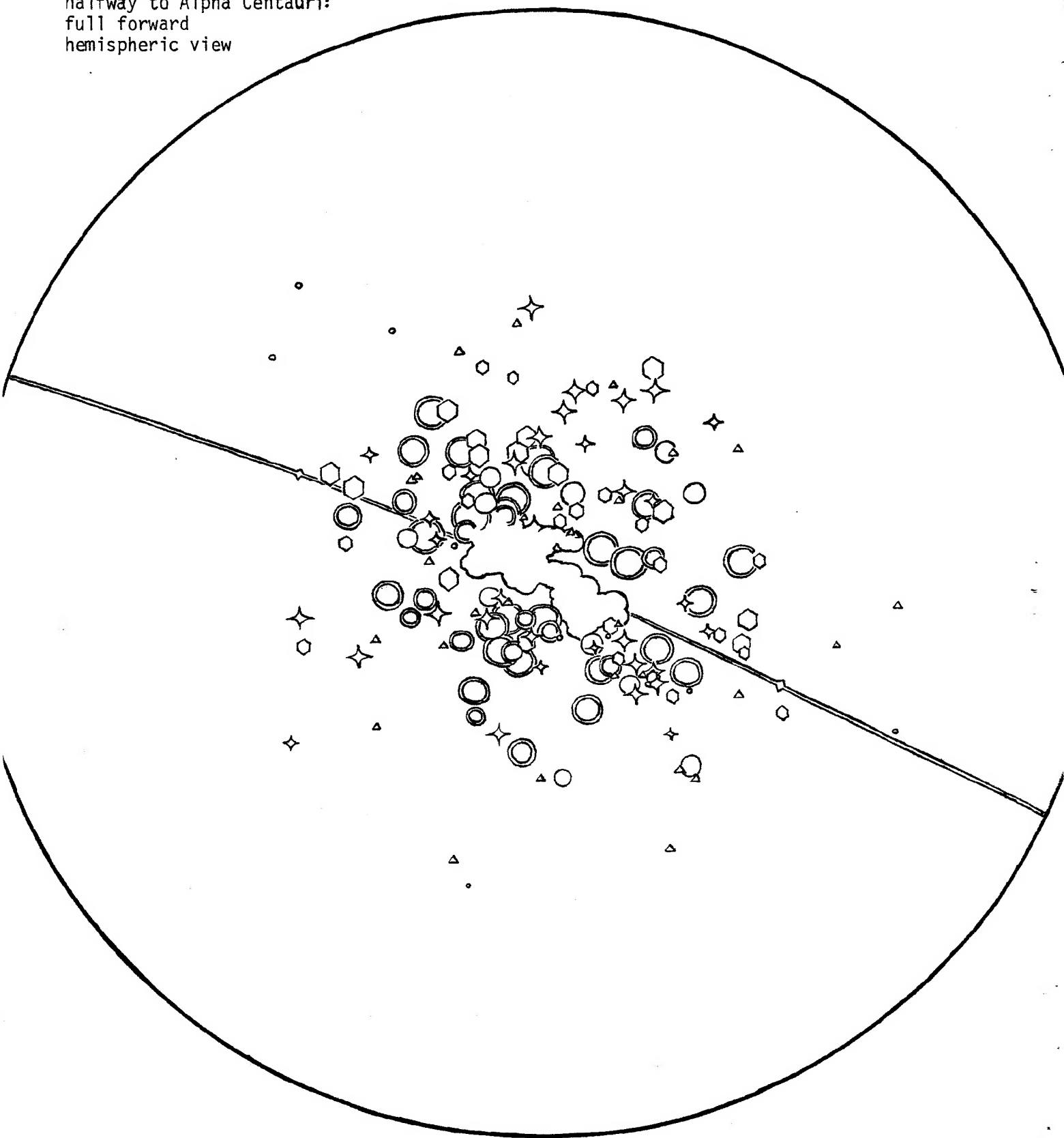
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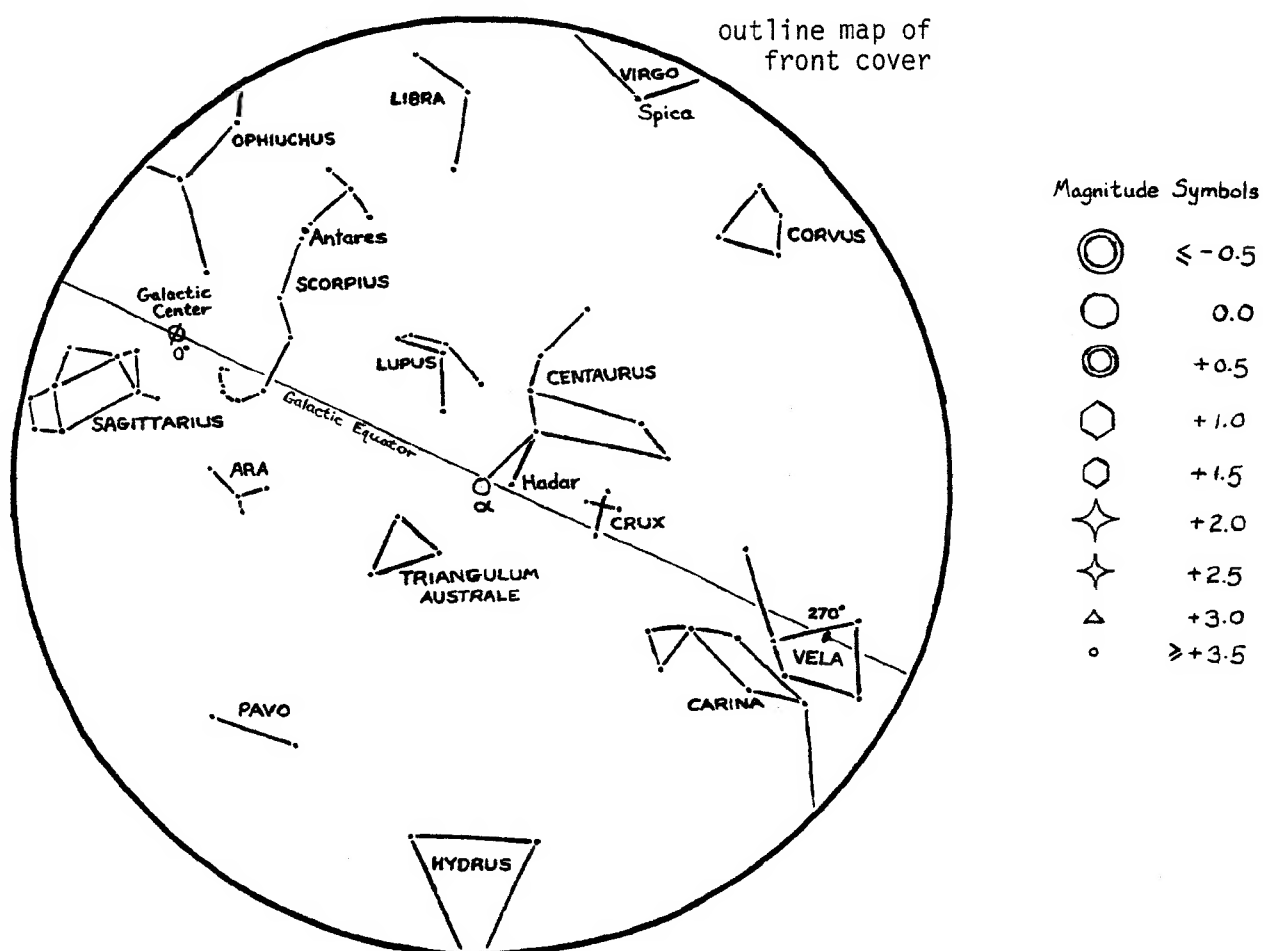
All right, what am I up to? What's that cover on APA-TECH about? You are on a starship which departed the Solar System at 0000 hours on 1 January 2100 and has been accelerating at 1 g for about 21½ months. You are now halfway to Alpha Centauri and about to execute a turnover maneuver to commence about 21½ months of deceleration. You are presently travelling at just over 95% of light-speed. Nearly three years have passed back at home. This cover shows roughly what you would see in the central 10° of your forward visual field (put your fist at arm's length before your eyes: that's about 5°).

The diagram has been calculated to show the relativistic effects of directional aberration and of Doppler shift with its consequent effects on apparent stellar brightness, as well as the result of physical displacement from the Solar System. Alpha Centauri appears at the center; stars seen from a point at rest to be as much as 58° away from Alpha are jammed into a 10° circle by aberration. Within this circle, all of the stars are strongly blue-shifted; stars with apparent surface temperatures over 28,000 K (O-type) are marked in violet, while those between 28,000 K to 10,000 K (B-type) are in blue. You see about 23% of the total sky compressed into about 0.8%. An outline map of the constellations seen therein is on page 5 (if some of them are not familiar to you, it may be because they are not visible from American latitudes).

On page 4 is a full forward hemisphere from the ship (I really didn't feel up to coloring it in, too; I'll bring my full-color version to Whatcon if you like). The view is now out to 90° away from center and takes in stars that would be seen as much as 162° away if we were at rest; 97.6% of the sky is compressed into just half! The reason you don't see stars all the way to the edge of the hemisphere is that their light is red-shifted to invisibility. In fact, some of the stars lying at the fringes are actually well behind you!

halfway to Alpha Centauri:
full forward
hemispheric view





Contrary to most expectations, the stars do not slide through violet and blue at the center to green and yellow halfway out to orange and red at the edges in a continuous and symmetrical fashion. Most of the stars at the center do appear violet or blue, but, as you look away from center, all stellar colors are intermingled. The stars at the fringes are orange, yellow and blue. I think this finally puts the kibosh on starbows. I again credit the article in last April's American Journal of Physics for supplying an equation I was missing (and again thanks to Messrs. Leininger and Higgins for pointing me that way). My additions to that article are that I can calculate the appearance for any destination (the AJP article used Polaris only) and that I have essentially complete data for generating an animated graphic display of voyages to Alpha Centauri and 70 Ophiuchi (now if I could just videotape off a minicomputer...). The stars used in these maps are the 286 brightest (down to magnitude 3.55) as listed in the 1980 Observer's Handbook published by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. The animated displays will probably use only the 15 brightest stars (down to magnitude 1.0) until a really fast minicomputer appears...

* * *

I really hate to do this to Arthur C. Clarke (do you doubt my sincerity?), but Bill Higgins' reference to Trouble in Aquila got me curious as to whether Clarke's suggestion that extraterrestrials are blowing up stars on purpose

made any sense at all. I fear that Mr. Clarke just didn't look up the available data. I have compiled from Burnham's Celestial Handbook a list of all recorded novae (which I won't print: I don't wish to bore you completely) and have prepared a few maps of nova distributions.

These maps are all plotted in the so-called new system of galactic coordinates where the radio source Sagittarius A marks the Galactic center and the central plane of the Galactic disk marks the Equator. Galactic latitude measures angles away from the Equator and longitude is measured "eastward" (from Sagittarius toward Cygnus) from the Galactic center in a full 360°.

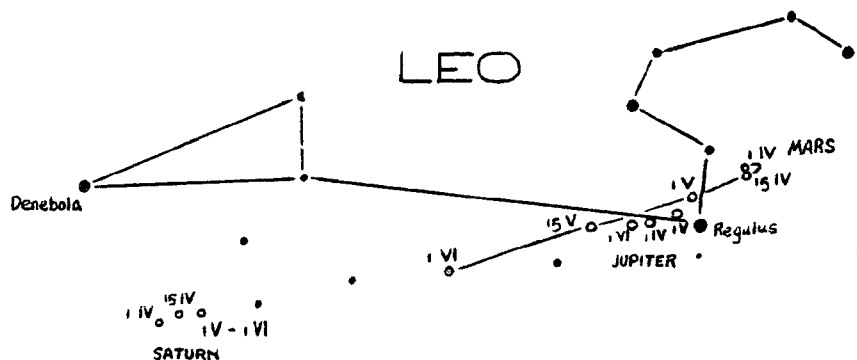
The first set of charts on page 7 are a chronological breakdown of all recorded novae between 1851 and 1975; the large chart is a statistical map of the distribution of all recorded novae from the 17th century to 1977. Novae tend to be concentrated toward the Galactic plane and especially toward the Galactic center. Notice the contribution which photography made toward this sort of observation after the 1870's. Before photographs could be made, one would tend to spot sudden brightenings of stars if they were well away from the disk of the Galaxy, since there is less obscuration by interstellar dust and simply a lower density of stellar images. Once photographic records could be compiled, one could look back upon earlier skies and recall which stars had been fainter before. Notice also that there is a decided asymmetry in the apparent distribution of novae, favoring the "eastern" half of the Galaxy. I believe this is because we are sighting down the spiral arms and can see between them, where there is less dust, when we look somewhat "east" of the Galactic center. There is also something of an asymmetry favoring the "southern" half of the Galactic center; there is some evidence (which I won't detail here) that there is somewhat less obscuration in this vicinity -- a "hole in the clouds", so to speak.

The maps on pages 8 and 9 show the positions of individual novae and the years of their "eruptions". The inset on page 8 is the region in Aquila which Clarke mentions. Compare the main map, which is in the same angular scale. The map on page 9 is an enlargement of the 20° square centered on Sagittarius A. The clump around latitude -3.5° and longitude 355° was rather busy between 1950 and 1952. But then 90% of all the stars in our Galaxy are seen from Earth to lie in this map! There are an awful lot of dead stars in the Galactic nucleus and hence a lot of possible novae. We've no doubt overlooked a lot of them too, since no one has ever sat down and compared every single stellar field photo...

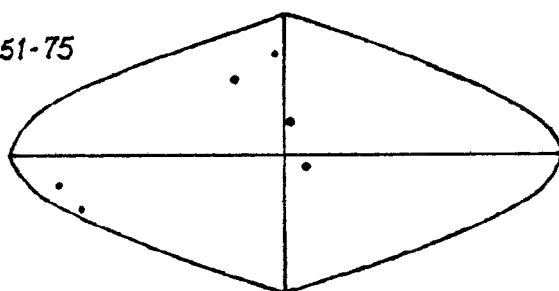
I certainly won't lose respect for Mr. Clarke over this small matter. After all, he was one of the folks to suggest geosynchronous communications satellites, which presently put the bread on my wobbly table.

* * *

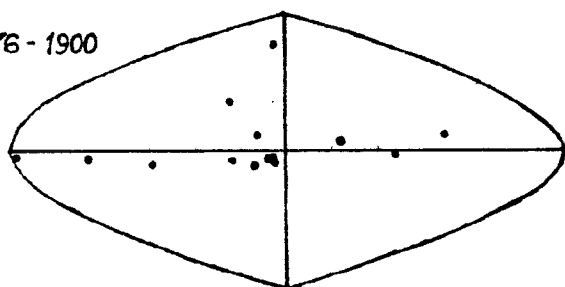
Let's have a map of planetary positions here and I'll say more further up...



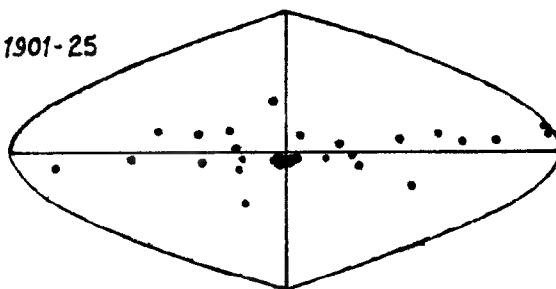
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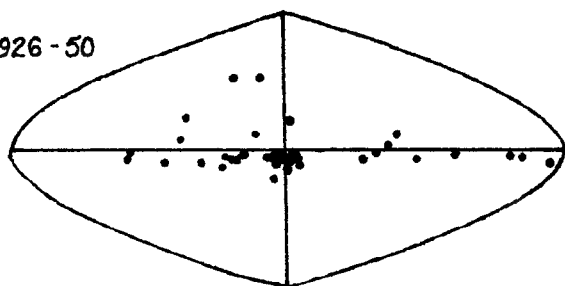
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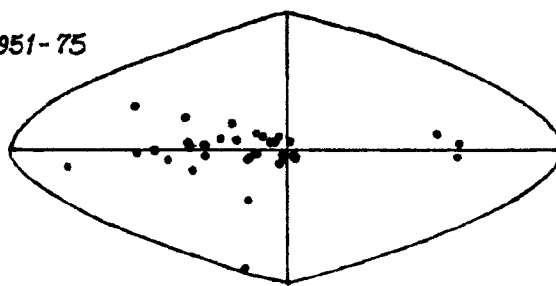
1901-25



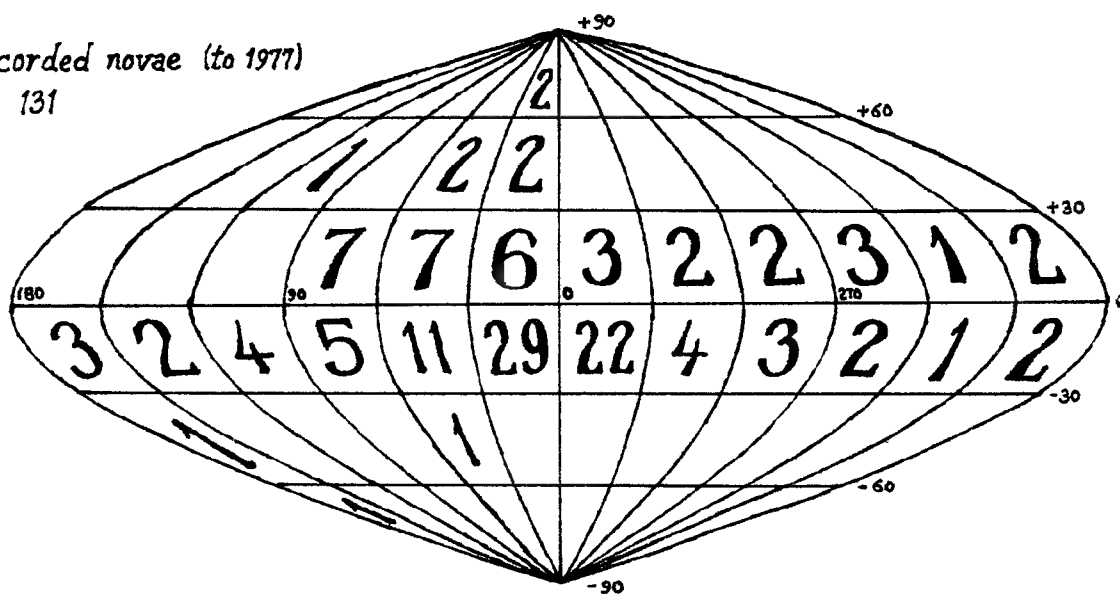
1926-50

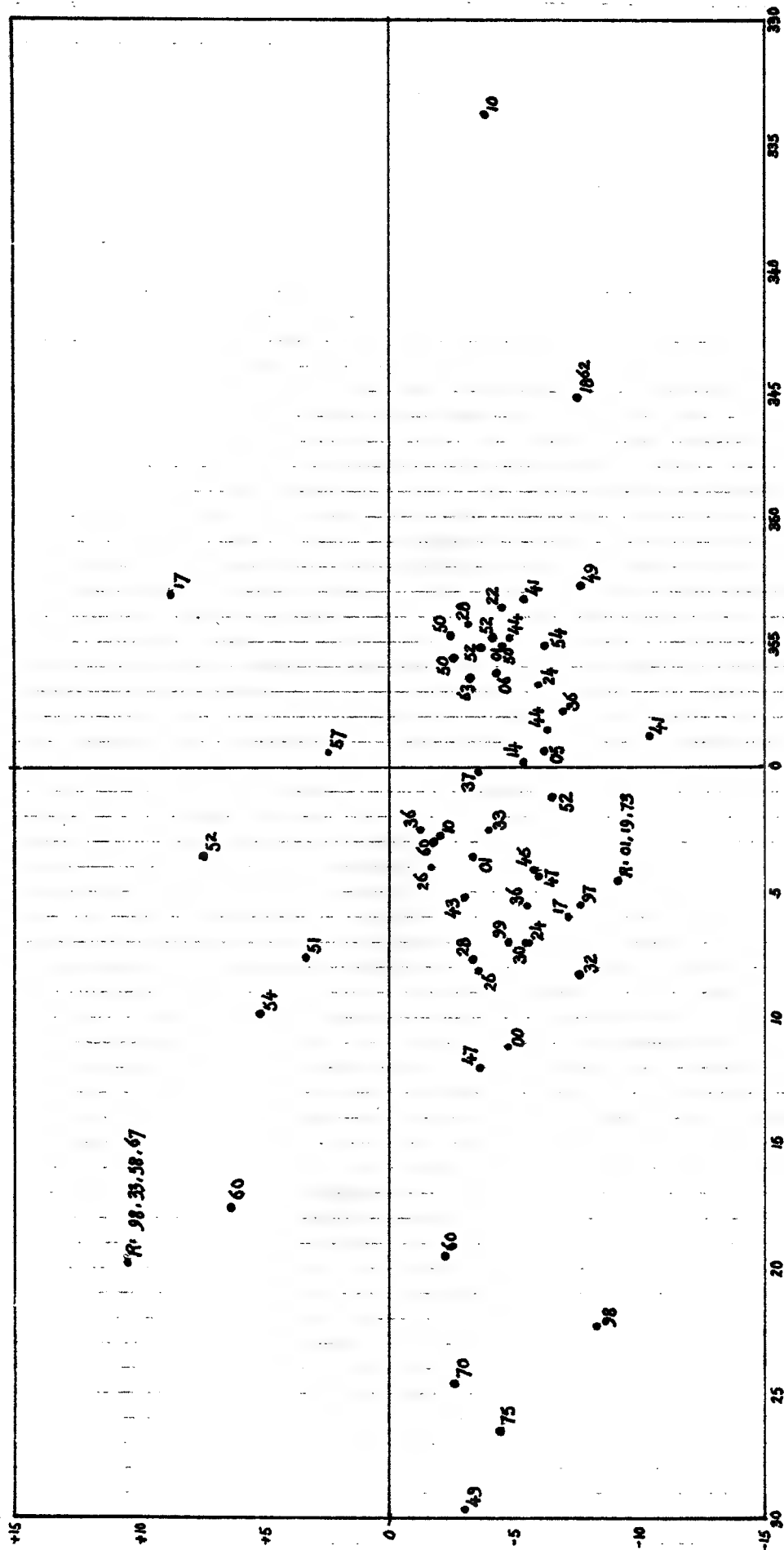


1951-75



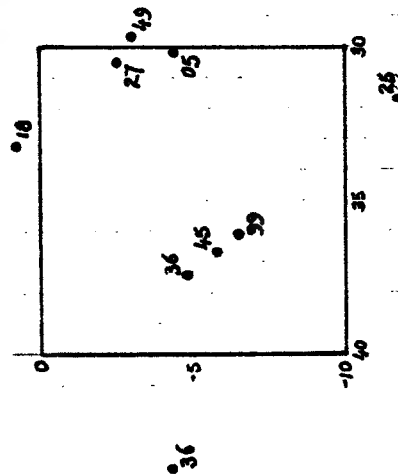
all recorded novae (to 1977)
total: 131

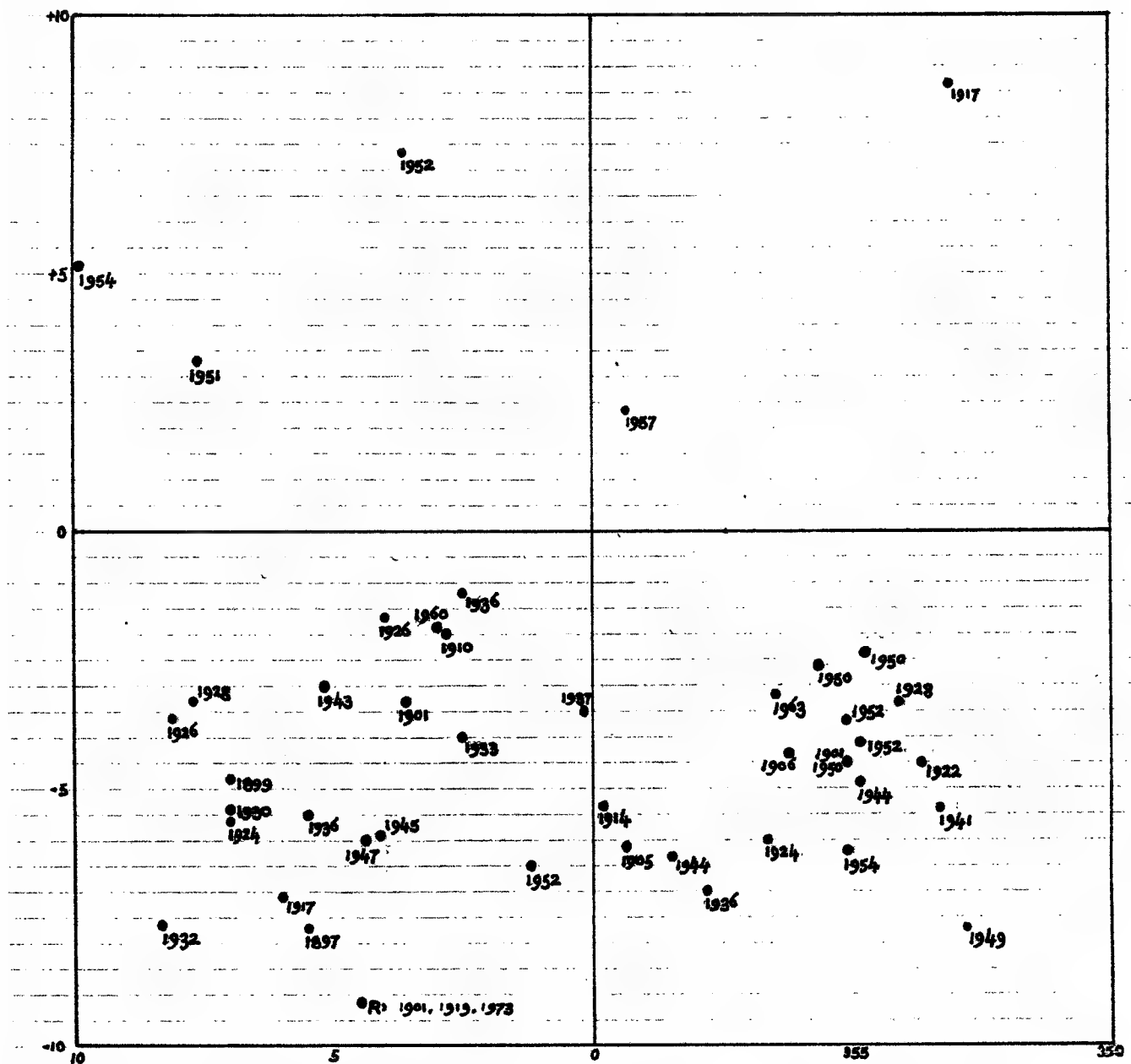




main map: distribution of novae in vicinity of Galactic nucleus from 1851 to 1975, plotted in galactic coordinates; numbers signify year of eruption (two digits only are used if unambiguous); recurrent novae are marked by an 'R'

inset: distribution of novae in vicinity of Aquila during same interval, plotted at same scale





(Gee, and I was going to cut down my page count this time...)

Enjoy Venus while you can: on April 5th, it will attain its greatest eastward angle from the Sun and then begin moving westward toward the Sun. On May 8th, Venus will be at maximum brilliancy. It will be visible in the west to west-northwest at sunset, moving rapidly closer to the horizon from night to night in May until it vanishes in the Sun's glare in early June. On June 1st, Venus and Mercury will be right next to each other, appearing low in the west. Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn will all continue to be in the vicinity of Leo through June, although Mars will be clearing out of there in a hurry as it resumes its rapid direct (eastward) motion. All three will be quite high in the sky at sunset through the next few months. On April 1, the five brightest objects in northern skies and their approximate magnitudes are: Venus (-4), Jupiter (-2), Sirius (-1.5), Mars (-0.5), and Arcturus (-0.1).

* * *

POLES OF ORDER 1 -

THE 555 TIMES: Now you've done it! You went and complained about the skimpy contributions and now mere mortal staples can't hold this APA together. I hope you're satisfied (I do, actually)!! But could you use something a little heavier to fasten the pages with, please?

William Patrick Typographers is a commercial typesetting firm in Philadelphia; I thought someone there knew them, since my APA-TECH 4 arrived in one of their envelopes.

ECLECTICA 1980: It's clear to me that our tastes in literature are quite different. I thought SLAN was terrible: stories where everything goes the hero's way, even when it doesn't, really make my stomach rumble. I gave up the Thinking Machine stories for the same reason. It really irritated me that van Deusen was just so brilliant that he had a contingency plan for anything (or claimed to) but didn't need one since everything came off so grandly. I just consider that bad writing -- I like my protagonists to sweat a little (I've certainly had occasion to).

I'm currently re-reading all of Niven's Known Space works for a little project into which I've insinuated myself. I'll have to compare your impressions with mine. (I try to determine something of the tastes of people I know, so I suggest to them things they might like -- it's the world's cheapest gift!)

SNOWBLOWING TRANSPORTERS: I was still hanging on here, waiting for your theory about all the cloud cover. Ah well, let me mention a few items which you may find of interest. Some people believe that both the Universal Flood (yes, just about every ancient people mentions it!) and the Atlantis myth may be what has come down to us from oral tales of our emergence from the last Ice Age. It is thought that the ocean levels may have been 50 to 100 meters lower during maximum glaciation. A small amount of additional land area and numerous small islands would have been available at that time which are now well underwater. From what we think we know about human evolution, people were probably fairly sophisticated some 9000 to 12,000 years ago and could have established coastal cities and have inhabited some of these islands before the water started pouring in. This may explain some of the underwater structures found near the Bahamas. Another interesting interpretation of the Atlantis myth (i.e., that it is an astronomical mnemonic) can be found in a collection of essays entitled Astronomy of the Ancients.

Astronomy may well be the most ancient of sciences. There is some astronomical content in the Vedas of the Aryans in northern India. Some people date these scriptures as about 20,000 years old, though 10,000 years may be closer to the mark. There is a bit of evidence that humans have been studying the stars for at least this long. Another view about the origin of astronomy is expressed in Michanowsky's The Once and Future Star. He suggests that the appearance of the supernova which produced the Vela pulsar some six to seven thousand years ago may have gotten the folks living in Mesopotamia hotted up about astronomy. This supernova was fairly nearby in the Galaxy; it would have been extremely bright and quite close to their horizon then. Michanowsky paints an image of the light of Vela-X reflecting off the Persian Gulf and thus appearing to have emerged from the sea; he proceeds to tie this in with myths of a god rising from the waters to bring humanity astronomy, writing, and other blessings of civilization.

The fact that dolphins love us, despite our behavior toward them, shows that they are sensitive, intelligent beings with no taste in friends. I heartily recommend Sagan's anecdotes about dolphins in The Cosmic Connection, if you haven't already read it.

I'll withhold any comments on Mars for now. I'm working my way through two tomes on results from the Viking mission published by the Journal of Geophysical Research. Everything's in there somewhere, I think. Capture into circular orbits is one of the great celestial mechanical mysteries; I may have something to say about that next time.

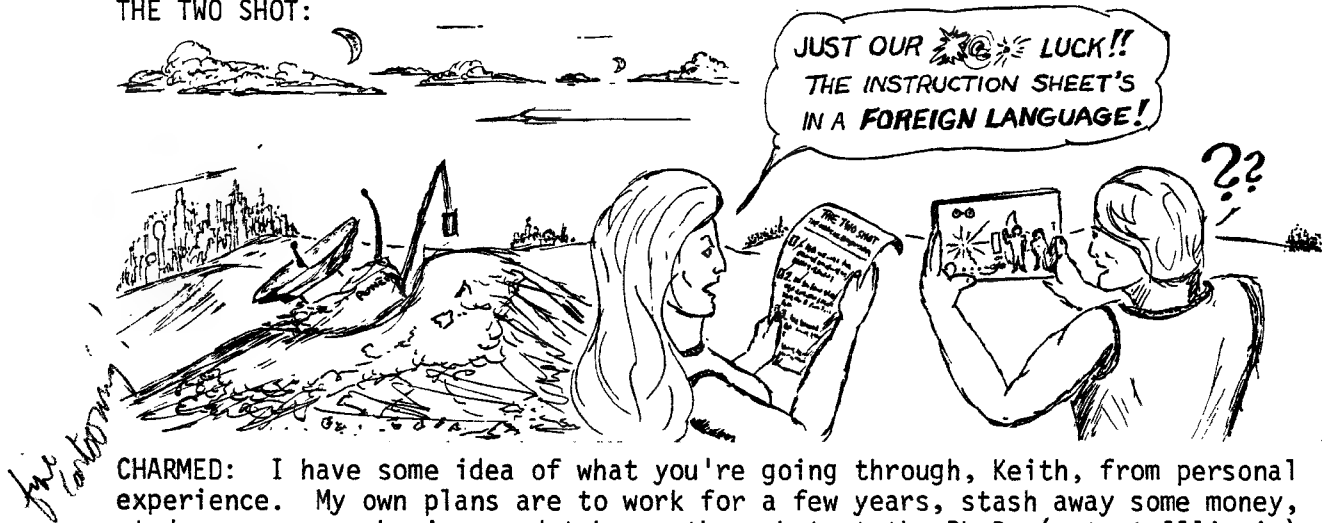
Photographic evidence! It isn't my eyes. You people really do get blurry at 4 AM!

OFF WITH THE TOP OF HIS HEAD! (cried the Red Queen): My experience has been that telling people just what you think of them doesn't change them much. When I got fed up with my summer job six years ago, I just let myself in after closing, left my badge and keys, and never returned. (I'd finished the work they'd hired me for, anyway, so I felt no pangs about terminating our association.) Best of luck to you! I hope you get the job you want.

FLATFISH FLOOGY (with a floy-floy): This "fan mail" is reminiscent of ChUSFA's letters to Doris Kulfinski. Who's Doris Kulfinski? What are all these Bills doing on the living room floor? Do you have a copy of Unified Field Theory as Revealed by the Tarot? How do I make my voice do this?

DEMONIC ENCOUNTER OF THE SECOND KIND: Now Noam Chomsky sez that what Washoe (her name is close to that, anyway) is doing isn't language; I begin to think that this is hair-splitting, though. Jacob Bronowski (of The Ascent of Man fame) says, in one of his books of lectures, that animals communicate in sentences. Using your example, a grunt or screech may mean "get out of my territory or I'll bite you", but it cannot mean anything else. Animals do not have the ability to take their sentences apart and rearrange the parts to say something else. Regarding the origin of human language, as Bronowski puts it, "in the beginning was the 'word'". It appears to me that there is a continuum of capability among all animals and that perhaps chimpanzees just clear the threshold to where we are. Chomsky believe that the human brain is "hard-wired" for language because of the similarities among and complexities of all human languages ("there are no simple languages"). Perhaps chimpanzee brains aren't "hard-wired" for language, yet are sophisticated enough to acquire it if they're taught well. Where the cetaceans stand is still not clear. How we got to have language is still a puzzler.

THE TWO SHOT:



CHARMED: I have some idea of what you're going through, Keith, from personal experience. My own plans are to work for a few years, stash away some money, study some more physics, and take another shot at the Ph.D. (not at Illinois). I think that the combination of work experience with a doctorate can probably get one further. Of course, for a job, I can recommend something personally. "My boy, I have just one word for you: satellites! Gonna be BIG!!"

I have a method for putting an end to war, but it's a bit difficult to implement. It requires the cooperation of over four billion people...

In reference to the Encyclopedia, I have to agree with "the Flounder". Such books in the wrong hands are an endless source of obnoxiously picky trivia questions. The book could be a source of inspiration for really interesting questions, though, provided you have a good group of folks to help screen them.

TYPICALLY MU-BETAN: Yes, I kept waiting for Hector to snag himself on a coat-hook or something and yank a fluidic cable. I agree that the business of flying through the rings was dumb (so was the visual effect), but why do you say that Saturn and the orbits were wrong? I thought there were some good ideas scattered around, but they were all squandered while the production company concentrated on the wrong things. It's hard to believe this was done by the same director who gave us Singing in the Rain and other gems (though this whole project was unceremoniously dumped onto him). Still, he talks of producing a "science fiction musical" (ominous!!).

Your comments here and Jamie Hanrahan's in San Diego Technics about science and religion are leading me to hop up on the soapbox and challenge some of the things I've been hearing you folks say ("reading you folks write"?). I'm planning a little article for a future Pyro. In the meantime, an exercise for all you techies: What is the difference between science and religion?

POLES OF ORDER 2 -

ECLECTICA 1980: L-1011s are the objects with the rapid angular motion across the sky and the intense, sporadic radio emissions on frequencies allocated by the FCC.

Well, you've read of my problems with mixing Apples and VCRs; did you succeed where I failed? I may offer a reward to anyone out there who makes me a nice video interface.

SNOWBLOWING TRANSPORTERS: I saw the ad for that booklet on 3D star maps and felt the guy wanted too much money. The list of stars within 6 parsecs of us is in numerous astronomy texts, the equations for transforming between spherical and Cartesian coordinates are straightforward analytic geometry (or you can get them right out of the CRC Handbooks), and the rest is an exercise for your calculator. But thanks, nonetheless, for the offer.

I have to take issue with your remarks about churchmen ignoring what the sky revealed. All pre-scientific civilizations studied the skies intently for celestial portents (they scarcely had any dogma to tell them what should be up there). In fact, we have quite the opposite problem: there are so many records of observations, especially in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, that the translators haven't begun to plow through it all. As I mentioned in an earlier QS, the Chinese think they've just recovered the record of Cygnus X-1 going off.

No, I missed the NPR interview with Rodgers and Ruff about the Music of the Spheres. Drat!

OFF WITH THE TOP OF HIS HEAD: As you now know, my dreams of starflight have yet to be videotaped... Will you settle for hand-colored maps of the view along the way? I've had those finished for a few months now and plan to cart them along to Whatcon. As for an animated short subject, maybe next year?

I do follow these snazzy new theories of the astrophysicists, but at a distance. A problem with modern Academia is that some young professors say all sorts of things on the off-chance that one will be "right"; then they get fame, glory, and tenure and proceed to go to sleep until retirement. There is always a bewildering profusion of ideas right after a new phenomenon is uncovered. It usually takes five to ten years for the observations to make clear whose guess was good. Nature is the final arbiter.

We have the same problem right now with this new value for the Hubble constant; if those guys are correct, the cosmologists and stellar evolution people and the galactic dynamics people and almost everyone else is in BIG trouble. Unfortunately, the news was leaked to the press before any of the astronomers knew what had been done. The paper on this work hasn't even reached The Astrophysical Journal yet! So there has been no opportunity to critique the measurements. I'll tell you what I told my Astronomy 102 students back in November: by around 1982 or so, someone else will have finished checking the work and then we can think about what it means. No solar neutrinos, you say? Hmmm...

DEMONIC ENCOUNTER OF THE SECOND KIND: You can view your chances of seeing a supernova in yet another way. Using Poisson again and assuming a human life-span of 75 years, one has about a 70% chance of seeing none and about a 25% chance of seeing just one. In this regard, I envy Kepler; he made the 4% shot: he got to see two!

The present astrophysical calculations suggests a fairly knife-edge situation: you're either a black hole or you ain't. Supposedly, if a ball of collapsed matter cannot supply the necessary internal neutron degeneracy pressure against gravity, it's cave-in time! A neutron star isn't that much bigger than its Schwarzschild radius, though, so I'm not sure how sharp the boundary line between the two conditions is. I shall investigate...

ROSE-COVERED, DECEASED CLOUDS: I don't think it's superfluous to say so; I'd like to see them myself. While the animation isn't on tape, the complete sequences are on diskette. All you need to see 'em is an Apple...

By the way, what are these comments to people that sound like the ravings of a deranged Variety headline writer?? (Wait a mo...I just noticed they're all anagrams -- but of WHAT?!)

DECEASED CLOUDS (cont.): You just reminded me of a time about three years ago when yet another Bill (in no way connected with GT) and I were into anagrams. I think the biggest one we came up with was for "The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign": The Universal Complaint -- I nag you if I trash a nib. Maybe I'll throw in our astronomical anagrams next time. Do you have a copy of Palindromes and Anagrams by Bergerson?

CHARMED: It wasn't supposed to be two contributions. I wrote Melange as a supplement to QS 2; it was going to go out with a postmailing of a couple of other zines. But it didn't, because someone was late. Someone who also contributes to this APA. I won't mention any names, but he lives in your house and owns mychine...

CIRCUMNAVIGATION IN 2.1903 YEARS: The "music of the spheres" refers to the spheres which carry the planets in the Greek vision. The music was not physical, but referred to the relationships among the sizes of the spheres. The ratio of the radii of any two spheres was supposed to be a ratio of whole numbers, which also defines a harmonic interval. The Creator (and, as the Greeks were fond of saying, perhaps Pythagoras) "heard" the music through its intrinsic mathematical relationships. (As a product of pure intellect, the Greek world view is truly magnificent!) By the time this view filtered down to medieval scholars, it had become somewhat corrupted. The ethereal planet-bearing spheres became crystal and the "music" was the sound the spheres made as they slid past one another. Kepler kept the name only and related the tones to the velocities of the planets as they moved in their elliptical orbits. The melodies of Kepler are those which Ruff and Rodgers portray in their recording (see QS 2). Incidentally, Kepler's melodies are also the basis for the Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn movements in Gustav Holst's The Planets.

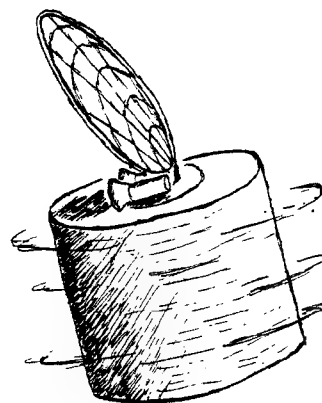
I haven't read the Clement stories yet, so I can't really comment on the nature of Mesklinites at the moment. Small animals still have to worry about gravity somewhat because of the stresses and strains their structures must undergo. (Remember that acceleration due to gravity is independent of mass.)

* * *

I went a bit long again; I'm really going to have to do something about that. (Maybe GTB can weld the next APA together...) I hope to see you folks at Whatcon and in APA-TECH 7 (First Anniversary Ish, kiddies!).

P.S. Do you folks have anything to do with GENTech Industries in Linden, New Jersey?

*This transmission
brought to you
VIA SATELLITE!*



Close Encounter of the first kind--sighting
Close Encounter of the second kind--physical evidence
Close Encounter of the third kind--my zine--

SEE ME. FILL ME (alias Outer Darkness)

Brought to you under this new title by popular demand, written, directed, thought of, and otherwise produced by (that wonder of wonders) Donna Struwe, currently ~~employed~~ living at 2545 W. Winona Chicago, Illinois 60625 (312) 275-3428

* * * * *

Aside from various people hinting quite subtly that Bill's first suggestion for a title might be just as good (if not better) than Outer Darkness, it has also been hinted (again, very subtly-- "...much too short." & "Write more...!") that I should make my contributions somewhat more lengthy than I have in the past. I shall certainly try, but with only my trusty manual it sometimes tends to get rather tedious. Also, I've never tried to write anything even remotely resembling a zine before. (I don't think there is anything even remotely resembling a zine...)

* * * * *

Last month I went to Urbana (you know, that hole in the map of Illinois) for a weekend to visit my sister and various other fans living (and I use the term loosely) there. Since they have this annoying habit of rolling up the streets at 8:00, (in the morning, that is) I let myself be ~~talked~~ talked into joining the Sacrificial Lamb Committee to go see Saturn 3. What a marvelous way to waste time. Don't see it!! Even if you can get in free (you won't even get what you pay for) OK. Earth is overcrowded and starving, so we have people working with hydronics for food--where?--Saturn of course where the plants can get plenty of light to help them grow. Also, among other things, Michael too, pointed out--they all think it's great fun to fly through the rings, so they all do it. I think that's enough space for that turkey.

* * * * *

And now, onto some observations, utterances, annotations, notes and comments on Apa-Tech #5--

Dr. Gonzo's Interim Eclectica--Valli--I find your con reports really interesting to read--whether or not I could conceivably write such a report (or a reasonable facsimile thereof) remains to be seen. It is an interesting style, and I'm sure I will try to imitate it at some point in the future. (you know what they say--"if you're going to steal, steal from the best")//And yes, I agree that it does help to look at things optimistically--my father told me that if it snowed I couldn't go to Ishercon...and it started snowing as we hit Chicago on the first. You know how much snow we got last winter.

Transporter Topics--Rod--Yes, (sigh) four older siblings. And yes, quite often-AAARRGH!!! However, one gets used to it after awhile. In fact, I find it strange to come home from school every day and find the house empty. I've sort of grown accustomed to living in a constant state of chaos, and having things quiet, all the times I'm used to noise, seems to be doing strange things to my nerves.//

The continuing reminiscences of me in regard to Apa-Tech #5 -- SMFM

by the by, this is page 2I've never gotten this far before***

TT--contd.--By the way, Rod, the song Goin' Out of My Head--yes, someone remembers it--me at least, if no one else.//What about breeding dogs and wolfs together? Which traits tend to be more dominant?//I too have been intrigued by the behavior of dolphins, but I have no more answers than you appear to have.

Off the Top of my Head--Doug--Thanks for the compliments--egoboo isn't the reason I write (although it certainly doesn't hurt especially when I need to be inspired into writing more) And please, don't snicker too loudly when you note the change in my title.

Smith's Corona--Dick--My title may not fit my intended image (but that's only if you mean the image of my looking like the "epitome of innocence"--but remember, you said that, not I) If that's not what you meant, what do you think my intended image is? Anyway, did Outer Darkness fit my image, intended or otherwise? Well, now that my title has changed, maybe my image will also...stranger things have happened. *image*

A Demon of the Second Kind--Bill--I think you may be wrong--I don't believe the world will ever catch up to Chuck Ott.//I see you have the same problem with writing as I do--I tend to think of things to write, but only very vague ideas that need some polishing-up before I'm ready to type them up and ship them off to Renee. Sigh. I've almost become resigned to my fate. Almost. This time I started early. But it still remains to be seen if I can actually have this finished before Minicon.

Roses to Deadend the Clods as They Fall--Bill--Windycon 5 was a convention of discovery simply because it was my first real encounter with fandom. The Thursday night meeting I had gone to was really just a glimpse. I had no way of knowing that by going to a con I would be meeting all the strange and wonderful people and especially the techies. It was at that point that my entire life began to change--I began to think much more of myself as a person than I ever had before. I discovered a group of people who have become close friends. I said it was another story entirely, which it is, but for the moment, this condensed version of it will have to suffice.

Tales (of woe) From the Charmed Sea--Keith--Since all you ask is a little support, (and that won't be hard for me to give as I would have even if you hadn't asked) consider me to be on your side. I'm sure others feel also, as I do, confident that things will eventually work out for you. And I don't think anyone would accuse you of forsaking physics (for the dollar or anything else)//I hope that after reading all this you don't regret advising me to write a longer contribution.//Incidentally, Bill gave me the words to "Stan Long" some time ago, although he never said he expected me to learn all of it.//You may have suffered being asked if you were someone's brother, but how about being asked "Are you two (Linda and myself) really sisters?!", or, "Why is her hair so much darker than yours--do you bleach it?" Believe me, it's almost as bad. I've also been often mistaken for someone's sister, although not too much in fandom, so I do know how you feel about that too.//Thanks for all your help with my programming--I couldn't have done it alone.

Can it possibly be so? Yes, dear readers, she's up to page 3--SMFM

More comments...

Around the World in 800 Days--Renee--See, even though I wouldn't have been dropped if I didn't write anything this time. I did anyway. (And I even managed to get three pages out of it!) With any luck, and a little more self-discipline, this time I will be finished before (yes folks, she said before) the deadline. But, if I were you, I wouldn't count on this becoming a habit. It's possible, but not terribly likely.

In regard to Apa-Tech #4--

Nothing in, Garb out--Gorden--I realize that it wasn't your fault since my name was not on the roster until Apa-Tech #4, but I'd really like to see your postmailing. I'd appreciate it if you would send it to me. Also Bill Higgins and Bill Leininger didn't get it (and maybe even a few other people) Thanks.

Well, I've gotten to the third page. One of the reasons I only wrote one page before, was the thought of being told that only using one side of the paper is a waste of space. OK. I agree, it is. But I'm using ditto, and you very same people complain about how unreadable it is because it bleeds through. I don't have any other method for duplication, so for now, ditto it is. I know it's a waste of space, and I know it fades with age, so you don't have to tell me, but any reasonable suggestions for another solution would be appreciated.

As you will note from my ballot, Renee, I don't think we should change the name. Maybe I've just gotten used to Apa-Tech. (It sort of grows on you...you know, kind of like a fungus) There's nothing wrong with Apa-Ratus either, but why not leave well enough alone?

And once again the subject of the deadline arises. I think the period of leniency should be one week, and longer only if for some reason you haven't yet collated. If you have collated, then maybe you should put the zines in the next issue, or use money in the person's account to postmail for them (now that I think about it, you probably haven't got the time to be postmailing other peoples zines--oh well, it was just a suggestion.)

I had promised myself that I would write two pages for this issue. And I ended up with three instead. It was easier than I thought it would be. And there's still three weeks till deadline!!

I do apologize for any and all typos.

I guess that's about all for now. Well, hope to see you all at Minicon!

Donna

***** Yesterday's Tomorrow's today *****

(Special After Thoughts Issue)

By Bill Leininger
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And now it's time to play Name That 'Zine!
Seriously, the title seems to have been the most difficult part this time. As it's now March 18, I don't think I'll have any troubles with deadlines on this one. Not much has happened since last I wrote (Tho by the time you read this, I will have entered and already been released from the hospital for surgery on that cyst I mentioned last time), so I'll go on to other matters.

Variations on a Theme-Afterthought the First.
(or the electronic APA revisited)

Some time after I received APA-Tech #5 with my original piece on electronic APA's in it, it occurred to me that I had rather neglected some of the capabilities of microcomputers. I am rather more accustomed to thinking in terms of time sharing rather than unconnected home systems.

Initially, this idea is just an off-line form of a plain paper APA. Contributions would be sent to the editor on a diskette, and then the diskette would be returned with all the contributions on it. Because the format of the disks must be compatible, this sort of APA would be limited to members with systems with compatible operating systems. This opens the possibility of trading software this way. Which leads to the second phase.

This time, the text would be embedded in programs. Which would make it possible (in most of the following I postulate a system similar to the Apple II) to make that text dynamic. Words could blink, be different colors, or be animated for impact. Potentially, musical accompaniment and sound effects could be added. But most importantly, this would allow us to make up for the worst disadvantage of electronic APAs. It would be possible to do illustrations.

Of course, anytime it became possible due to the spread of networks and the upgrading of members systems, it would be possible to switch to a network and more interactive form. In fact, eventually the systems on which the entire structure had been based could be replaced by more advanced models. As long as the languages on which it had all been based could be run or simulated, all the old issues would remain accessible. In the beginning, it could be based on

maybe 6502 assembler and BASIC, but open to any machine that could simulate the assembler. Later on, it could be upgraded to 68000 and Pascal. Once everyone was connected to a network, the problem of disk incompatibility will virtually disappear, because if anyone wants a personal copy on disk they will make it themselves on their own system.

The last several issues leading up to the most recent would be kept in network storage, but all other issues would be kept in offline storage by the editor, acting as librarian. Every member would have an index to past issues, by topic and author, and would be able to request copies of material by the network's mailbox facility.

At this point, with the exception of the special effects capability, we have again arrived at the PLATO notefile.

Earlier I talked of using existing languages. What would be better is a sort of mixed language, which would embed commands invisibly in blocks of text, calling machine subroutines from a common package distributed to members or from special software included with that 'zine. Naturally, this requires much more initial programming effort, tho it is easier for most users to use. Most computer languages are not well suited to putting small programs in large text blocks. Quite the opposite, in fact.

Afterthought the second (or Again, Simian Syntax)

It seems that shortly after I wrote my first piece on Chimpanzee language usage, articles started to appear offering evidence to the contrary. Some of this evidence is quite compelling, though so far it has only converted one of the original researchers. It seems there was an analogous case back at the turn of the century of a German horse who could answer question by tapping his hooves. Eventually, it turned out that he was only responding to facial expressions and even such subtle clues as pupil dilation!

At any rate, it seems that the advocates of this idea have been a bit selective of what dialogues they used to support their researches. However, those on the other side also use such facts to support their case as one chimp has never communicated with another by sign. This may be asking a bit much of a being whose natural mode of communication is not sign, and has only been signed at by one or two humans, beings noticably different from themselves. As for asking for consistent use of syntax, there are areas of this country where we're having a lot of trouble getting that much from high school students....

Yesterday's tomorrow's today-

The 1980's are upon us. This may seem a totally trivial remark, but there are darker forbodings lying behind it. How many people thought about it before 1978? (More intriguingly,

how many people have thought about the fact that the year 2000 lies but 20 years away? In 1975, a company was running a program having to do with bonds. These bonds took 25 years to mature and dates are often truncated to two places for years on computers. The system figured that the bonds would mature in the year 00, and used this number in it's calculations. And this will start happening more frequently.) These are the 1980's, as I said. Yet, traditionally the 1980's were the future, not as much as the 2000's perhaps, but one of the most important fictional dates of all now lies but 4 years from us. Bill Higgins said some time after new years, "If this is 1980, why do all the cars still have wheels?". I replied that I was happy that, while we had not succeeded in fulfilling the prophecies, at least we had beat the cynics and were still alive as a planet. But more and more lately it has been sneaking up on me. Last week, I was watching a TV movie. It started with a flashback to 1943, and then showed a plane landing with the caption, "Honolulu, 1980". My instinctual thought was "Oh, it's set in the future, eh?"^a

Of course, what it really boils down to is that we are always impatiently awaiting change, which is expected to be sudden and dramatic. Also, in predicting the future there is a tendency to be terribly frivolous, and to try to wish away minor annoyances of the moment. Many of the predicted changes are now in the works, and will gradually make themselves felt. Look how long it took to wipe out Smallpox.

Ending notes-random jottings

Nova is a fascinating show. You can tune in just for a second to check what's on this week, and before you know it you're enjoying a documentary on desert irrigation. I wonder if Carl Sagan's show, Cosmos, will be able to get around it's special effects (a real aid to understanding, sure, but no substitute for good writing and subject matter) considering Carl's past efforts it does seem likely that he will.

Speaking (several lines late) of Smallpox, the eradication of this disease means that if time travellers wish to visit the slightly more distant past, they may very well have to stop off in the early sixties to get vaccinated against this disease, and doubtlessly others that we may happen to remove from the face of the Earth. Perhaps we should start searching old records for phantom people who show up for examination and immunization, and are never heard from again...

Well, that's it for the subjects this month. If all this seems a little sketchy, I'm sorry. I had meant to be more complete, but about two days after I started on this project I came down with the flu. It is now April 2, and I am once again sitting in Datalogics, home of Dick Smith, Doug Price and Chip Bestler, using the selectric and the Xerox. But now it's time for mailing comments.

Mailing comments-

Memo from the Chair-I'll go on record as being for a week's grace period after the deadline. Sorry to hear about the two bouts of Flu. Since embarking on writing this contribution I have been afflicted with it myself, but luckily only for a short 24 hours.

Quintessential Singularity-On the subject of The Black Hole, believe it or not, I recall an interview with a highly placed person on the movie's production staff who denied any influence over TBH by 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. It's nice to know there really are job opportunities in Hollywood for the blind... One of the few things not borrowed by the new movie was the quality of the old classic. Sorry to hear about your Apple problems. I guess they will keep having to run the program to show it. Speaking of running the programs, there have been some people in the Mid-west who have expressed interest in seeing your work. If you have a copy available, there are some folks who can get at Apples. In fact, Alex Ellingsen dragged one to Hoosiercon recently, perhaps he could do so again. (though it is true that South Bend is unusually close to Kalamazoo. Perhaps Marcon would not be impossible, though.) I would really like to hear that tape of "Harmony of the World". Perhaps we could get together at Noreascon II. Really liked both mass driver cartoons. As for astronomical arts and crafts, I've recently seen a photo of an attempt to model the upper hemisphere of jupiter in layered Jello that turned out particularly nicely. On the subject of The Lathe of Heaven, I really enjoyed it, but I had read the book. I watched it with Doug and Gretchen, Dick and Valli, and Jerry Corrigan, and I believe I was the only one who wasn't totally lost. It may be the only TV show I've ever seen filmed in Short Hand.

Dr. Gonzo's-1941 was an absolutely incredible film, if only for the innumerable pastiches of recent movie cliché scenes. In Black Hole, the final scene only confused me without being as pretty and original as the light show in 2001. Then again I probably made the wrong choice of who to sit next to.

I'm going to have to start structuring these comments.

In Tales of Known Space, the first stories are among the first that Niven had published, and are long before he consciously thought of tying everything together in one grand package. Intent to deceive is still one of my favorites, and one of the few Niven stories that could be successfully adapted to radio.

I assure you I have read the mushroom planet books. Your description of the color fits well with the series. (incidentally, the last two books are the best. Mr. Bass' Planetoid, and Time and Mr. Bass are well worth reading, but as is the case with so many Children's books, you may

Mailing Comments (cont.)-

Dr. Gonzo's(cont.)-actually have to be a child at the time to read them to best advantage.

Transporter Tonics-The only thing is, I seem to recall hearing that RC servos are a tad short on muscle for a good number of applications.

Video disks as substitutes for microfiche sound like a good idea in some cases, but for records which are going to lie idle for ten or twenty years, I can't help but wonder if it'll prove economical. Of course, for the more usually used stuff it sounds like a good bet, but the read hardware sounds a bit expensive. My real point is that it seems quite possible that we will always be saddled with microfilm for some uses.

Your photo's don't seem that bad. Did you do anything special to them before reproducing them?

Outer darkness-That's a nice cover, Donna.

Off the Top of My Head-Sorry that the job with Western Electric fell through, Doug. (That's the advantage to living in Chicago. You hear all these things before the rest of the country.) As for the fact that Higgins couldn't make it to Whatcon, maybe we should talk to the other half legend about the Barry said Bill couldn't Show.

As for Exxon getting out of the oil business, I suddenly remembered that they are only a part of ESSO of Europe, which does make it a bit more unlikely.

I will wait until next issue to comment on the colonisation bit in this month's APA.

Smith's CORONA-I chopped the tutorial on PLATO notefiles. if you want more information, just ask.

As for the modem, I'd settle for just a simple 300 baud unit that would cost under \$100 to build and was reliable enough to work over a fairly good long distance phone line. Originate/Answer a real plus but not totally necessary.

What's EMYCIN?

The Two Shot-How could I comment on this and keep my image intact?

Roses-I don't think Web Between the Worlds is even worthy of a nomination. I agree that Titan is better than Ophiuchi Hotline, but it's paperback is coming out rather late (though it does have it's serialization going for it.) Does anyone know how many recent Hugo winners (or nominees) made it on the list as original Hard covers, before paperbacks? were released?

Mailing Comments (cont.)-

Roses-Actually, on the subject of SF on TV, I've just heard that Man From Atlantis is a real big hit in China. So it goes. Duck Bouy Rams Neo Zither Monotone? Dicks Blinky Really Needs Zilog Micro. Deadly Blight Renders Necessary Zinc Mining. Dubious Bookstore Realises New Zero Market. Dead-Bone Readers Need Zeppelin Mooring. ("Combined Martian Dim Wits and Fools? I've got a better one, but it's unprintable. Fnord.)

Tales from the Charmed Sea-sorry to hear of the difficulties, and good luck job hunting. Satellites sound good. (Oh, well. look on the bright side. At least you have a degree to pry open doors with. I bounced before that point and am still trying to recover my balance.) Halo Muons?

I did brush up that shaggy dog letter and submitted it to IASFM. They rejected it and said that "The humor is weak, Alas.". I'll let it go for a while and try again at various places this summer. In the mean time, i've got this sort of Fantasy novellette I'm sort of working on...

How can you be token WASP? I'm white (so are most of us.) I'm Alsace Lorrainian on one side (close enough?) but I geuss I miss it on the count of protestant. I'm Agnostic.

Around the World-What, no mention of the incredible plastic Jello? (O.K. I know the second batch was a (quite literal) flop.

The first was alright, and I know what I did wrong now...)

Interesting to hear about finding the balloon. It just goes to show you it's a smaller world than anyone had thought.

So that's why the cops stopped. I hadn't heard about the stolen laser. (Or if I had, I'd forgotten. Some things about that party are still a little fuzzy.)

USIL seems to be also a pun from DUNE. Even if it is misspelled.

Probably the best way to be sure your gun is not on in the holster is to put a safety on the handle's base. But I do realise that this would require changes and an additional expense and work for the two basic models.

As for giving people something to comment on, I'm trying. it's just that as a rule I tend to try to avoid controversy.

MuBetan-It's too late to wake anyone around here to ask for a fancy type wheel, so I'll have to make do with the anglicized version.

Keep us informed on the 68000 project. There are a great many ideas on what should be part of a home/system that really haven't been used too often yet.

I'm glad I missed Saturn Three. Like the remake of Shape of Things to Come, it promised to be a turkey. You can't always tell a book by it's cover, and not all turkeys telegraph the punch, but some times you can tell. Interesting article excerpt.

Well, this is a convenient spot to stop. I'll be more complete next time. (Gordon, sorry about no comments yet, but I misplaced your post mailing. Next time for sure.) And with those valiant words, the intrepid author turned and ran off the page.

KWIP #1 For Apa-Tech By Kip Williams

115 E. Mulberry, Ft. Collins, CO 80524



Deadline, deadline. Gee, deadlines not until April 7, so I can start this thing today (March 19) and do a paragraph or a page and then let it sort of sit and mellow until, say, April 3, at which point I can frantically whip out an illegible zine and cram it in an envelope while the ink's wet. Such fun. Actually, I prefer to believe I'll work diligently at a regular pace and astound all with my snappy patter.

So, any minute now, I'll stop meditating on the clean, white perfection of this piece of paper, and start making with snappy patter.

BACKGROUND I got into such because of Chuck Rozanski and Gordon Gubb. Chuck opened a comic & SF store in Ft. Collins, and Gordon started meetings of an SF-clublike substance. Some time later, the store was gone, and Gordon had fled to Wichita, during which time I'd joined AZAPA and eventually started going to cons. Later I joined DAPA and quit AZAPA (which was later still). Since I put a remarkably complete cultural life history in my first DAPAZine, FILE 13-A, I won't try to do it again, but I'll be happy to answer most specific questions. Since leaving AZAPA, I got into PHOENIX, a mysterious apa which doesn't seem to be rising from its ashes just now. Then I dropped out of DAPA. This left me totally out of active apac; and that is why I am in this basket on your doorstep.

EDITORIAL POLICY The first and most important thing in the policy is the title. It will be the same each month, a title chosen for its shortness, based on letters I'm fairly good at, so I can do it as keen as possible.

The standard production method is as you see it, hand-rot with Rapidomatic pens. This goes for text and illoes. Unless otherwise credited, everything in this zine is by me; Kip Williams.

Most other details of format are laughed at. I spit on format; PTUL. Format is for weaklings.

A word here on that inevitable bane of apa communication: WHIMSY. Oddly enough, apahacks can toss off totally nonsensical statements sure to be taken as jokes, and things manage to get awful when the responses seem to indicate that said whimsy has been taken seriously.



MAILING COMMENTS ON COVER Nice spherical effect on the celestial object.

555 Gee, I didn't get a ballot. You are getting lax!

ALREADY TIME TO MAKE A DECISION - SHOULD I MAKE M.C.s BY NAME OR TITLE??

PONDER PONDER PONDER PONDER... BETTER MAKE IT NAMES... SHORTER.

GREGORY Lucky devil! To be the first recipient in the apa of a GENUINE mailing comment from me.

I enjoyed THE BLACK HOLE. It was such a Disney flick, as the term has come to mean. The whole PG thing, for instance. Here they want to reach out; to stand on their tippie-toes, as it were, and get a hand into the taller cupboard. So they take their

(Z)

HAND-
WRITTEN

story and hold a conference to see how many "hells" and "damns" and how much violence to put in to get that **PG** instead. Then they look at their "hecks" and "goshes" and "darns" and decide which ones to replace. I also got some warm chuckles from the science bloopers. It just busts me up to see people breathe in a vacuum, and to see a neon 'Black Hole'.

Yet, despite the horrifyingly anthropomorphic machobot scene, and various other egregiousnesses (and remember, most - if not all - of the technical errors are easily explainable. Just remember: this is taking place in the same universe as Hebbie the Sentient VW Bug: it looks good and makes no sense.) the movie gave me hope for Disney Studios actually growing up someday. The somewhat un-kiddie-ishness of the dehumanization and Dante's Inferno themes, plus the death of Anthony Perkins (the swellest minute of the movie) leave the way open - just possibly - to hopes that those guys may someday reach puberty.

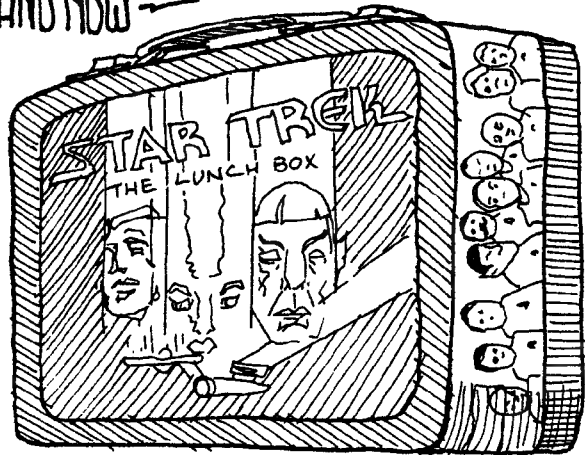
(re: Nancarrow's Studies for Player Piano) Is this the one (or is one of them the one) where all the keys are depressed at once along the way? I've heard about these, and maybe we even did one of those on Piano Night #1.5 back in February on KCSO. (re: PDQ Bach) It's true, the more you know about classical music, the worse it gets. Sometimes something entirely new comes out after a few listenings. An example of this is found in the concerto for piano vs. orchestra, where the cue is given twice for Schickele to come in for a solo before he gets it. After a few listenings I realized the two short cues plus the long one results in "When the Saints go Marching In". In the

Royal Firewater Music, he introduces two instruments: the Bass Drum, which is played by slopping it with a large fish; and the Bermuda Triangle, which disappears. **Wow!** Firesign Theatre!

My favorites keep changing as new ones come out. My current favorites are **EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IS WRONG?** and **THE GIANT RAT of SUMATRA**. I used to

like the first side of the second album best (**How Can You Be in Two Places At Once When You're Not Anywhere at All?**) and **Bozos** was it for a while, and **Waiting for the Electrician** had it in the bag when it was the only one. I heartily recommend **THE GIANT RAT of SUMATRA**. Between the depiction of Hemlock Stones and Dr. Flotsam and the theft of the amazing Zeppelin Tube ("A force so powerful it can only be used for Good or Evil!") is the most amazing texture of puns since Finnegans Wake. ... and you can believe me because I never lie, and I'm Always Right.

AND NOW →



STAR TREK - THE THERMOS NOT INCLUDED

VALL My family has taken, for the most part, to giving me money for Christmas. As I go to Texas then, and the music stores there are much better than those here seem to be, it almost all turns into music. Then I assign pieces of music to relatives for thank-yous... for instance, 'thanks Grandma and Aunt Mary for the money with which I got Carmen's' etc.

RES I don't get the line at top of p. 2 in Trans-Topic #3: "...one could be coincidence, but two?" This only seems to me (who came in late, perhaps) to relate to the... oh, NEVER MIND! I now see that you refer to the two similar variables, not the number of planets involved. I suppose I should build a freeway through that paragraph, but I'll leave it in as generous proof that I too can make mistakes.

Oh, so you do have a first name. Now the rest of my comment is obsolete. Gimme my gun, now...

DONNA The trouble with a week's grace after deadline is that certain LAZY TYPES (hey, watch the finger, bud; you almost put my eye out) will then automatically relax again and be late for the new 'deadline'. What's needed for the punctuality of the apa is for individuals to fool themselves into thinking the deadline is a week sooner. Like the way I set my clock (not my watch) ten minutes fast. I find I will get up on time if it looks like I'm already late. Honest, it sometimes works.

DOUG Now that's what I call a review: "For 20 million you shouldn't see the wires". I'd forgotten about those wires. Two more points against Black Hole. I'd heard that "STAR TREK the Flicks" alternate title is "Where Nomad has gone Before."

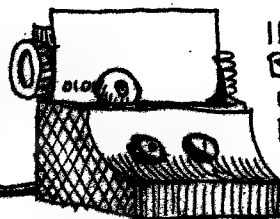
Gosh, my grandfather used to work for Western Electric in Chicago, growing crystals. Since I never met him, I've always wanted to find out more about what he did. His name was B.J. Bobbit, and I'd heard his process for accelerated crystal growth is still used. This apa reminds me of old AZAPAs, except there are more offset and xeroxed zines in this than AZAPA'd have dreamed. In other words, it's legible. Not that this comment is all that relevant.

DICK I called all-the-hell over town and to Denver trying to find an outfit that rented terminals. The prices are OUTRAGEOUS! In '72 the math class rented a decwriter for \$30/mo., now you couldn't get the chicken-plucking modem for that. (Oh, all right, you COULD). So, I'm still stuck with fighting hordes of students to go to CSU, wait for a CRT, and punch in for the joy of seeing the screen light up with those familiar words.

GREEN SYSTEM DOWN

FOUNDER My favorite trivia question at the moment is "who wrote Seeds of Change?" Most people slap their heads and agonize, as they probably have seen the book at least one hundred times, and just managed to wipe it from their minds.

Here's another: What's B. Kibb's first name (Renée, don't tell them - I think I did this in AZAPA once)?



IBM Selectric Binary Type-writer.

For people who type with two fingers.

Different type faces available.

BILL I've recently heard some heads claim that scientists throw out a lot of chimp gibberish, the better to make the rest look. This annoys me. I want to believe they can talk. I'd like for a few chimps to learn Ameslan, then go into the jungle to teach the rest. Imagine the results:

- 1) Would religious leaders will then be compelled to save THEIR souls, too.
- 2) They can interpret the dolphins for us someday.
- 3) The apes can start their own APA and call it APEA or something.
- 4) The IRS will have to take bananas.

(Re: new name for apa) How about ZAPA?

(Re: Time after Time) I'm morally against viewing or reading any more material by Nicholas Meyer. The man is a live-action version of Ralph Bakshi, whom I also boycott on principle. Meyer apparently has not the wit or will to design an original character. After he was done (temporarily) introducing Sherlock Holmes to everyone smart of Phillip Jose Farmer, he decided it would be even fun to go write about H.G. Wells and Jack the Ripper. I'm sure many people flock to see the next "twist" in the Old Man Ripper saga (which is how Meyer makes his money) but I will not spend one red cent in support of the ilk-song mentality of Meyer or Bakshi. Plagiarism is only worthwhile as humor, and it has to be done damn well (as in PQQ Bach) before it can be anything but a midget standing on a giant's shoulders, bragging how tall he is.

BILLH Bills, Bills, Bills! I'd rather see "Black Hole" get a Hugo than "Alien". After all, it's a "HORROR/sc" film could get it, why not a "WESTERN/sc" like STAR WARS,

feel the same about PJF

or some other "NON-IDEA, NON-SCIENCE" flick, like "Plan 9 from Outer Space" or "Mars needs Women"? I really hate to see people make money exploiting poor tools who don't have enough to be afraid of in real life. Especially when said horror is extracted with the aid of 200-decibel synthe-screams and accelerating heartbeats and constant strobing. I know this is an unpopular opinion, but ALIEN bit the big one.

Who who who who... wait a minute. How can you say The Martian Chronicles was a good TV adaptation without having read it? Actually, the first show and the second half of the second were first-class adaptations from the book. Also it ended about right (barring one or two technical absurdities in the shot of the -ha ha- reflection scene), but one or two incredible deviations from the script came in. Even with these barely-forgivable lapses, it was the best TV SF I'd seen until The Lathe of Heaven. Now THAT was GOOD.

Now, now... the third season of Star Trek wasn't bad because they ran out of ideas, it was bad because NBC promised Gene Roddenberry a choice time slot on Monday night, then when Laugh-In insisted on half that slot they put ST on Friday at Ten PM, whereupon Gene got miffed, and went from line producer to "Executive Producer", and let others run the show down.

Cripes, you're still insulting Bradbury, but he's great. A lot of our best writers started out of love of his writing. True, his best material isn't "real" SF, but don't knock his treatment of people. Real people aren't logical. Several of your specific gripes are things involved in the print-to-tube transition, like truck noises, Martian physiognomy, the control room (Bradbury didn't have any contact with earth after the bang, nor did he have Rock Hudson along the whole time: his time-fusme was much longer), the chicken-pox line (which was known by the omniscient author in the book, but given to a character in the show).

Telling Houston Mars looks like Illinois would have made sense in the show. In the book, there wasn't so much communication with Earth. You might as well criticize Tolkien for Bakshi's Lord of the Rings.

KETH "I get this feeling I am the token wasp of GT. Any pretenders to the throne?" Not me. I can't be. I don't wear glasses.

RENEE Asking questions like "who will provide directions for this project?" or "Who will break the project into manageable mini-projects?" is a swell way to get answers like: "Not I, said the Neo!" "Not I, said the truth!" "Not I, said the SMOF." I was following the STAR TREK movie saga since 1975, at which time Gene Roddenberry's script (ST meets God) was rejected, and Robert Silverberg's was rejected. I think maybe Haulan wrote one they rejected, too. They must have been waiting for a good used story with some miles on it, you know, one that had been broken in. As to Gen having control, this thing was just TOO BIG to trust to its Creator.

I warn you, if pressed, I will drag out my depressing catalog of Madison Avenue-brainwash techniques used for the horror in ALIEN. They did everything short of having usters shake up and squirt blood at people.

BENTLEY I still recall the line believer was asked how he knew, and he answered "I know." That, it seemed to me, was the essence of religious belief. Someone told you it was true, and convinced you you'd go to hell if you didn't believe it, so you believed it. That's what I can't swallow, the "Just-check-your-brain-at-the-door" routine. (Another way of putting it: "Use the force, Luke! Stop thinking. It just causes trouble.")

GARBESSTAK

Where are you? I thought Tullio was in this? What girls?

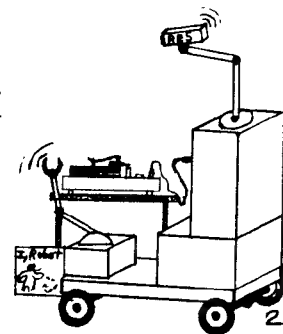
Me go now.
Kip Williams

no decking
brain's
against human
eyes
prove
impossible

"SO, YOU'RE ONE OF THE NEW
COMPACT MODELS ———"

ESOTERIC STUFF

There are two main reasons for these little articles. The first is to maybe entertain you while making you think, and the other is to try out ideas for stories and background information. Its fun to take disconnected bits of information and invent an explanation that puts them together. This is basically what Larry Niven did in Protector, explaining everything from the garden of Eden to arthritis. Unfortunately, humans have been around a lot longer than he seems to think.



MMMM, BETHOVAN !

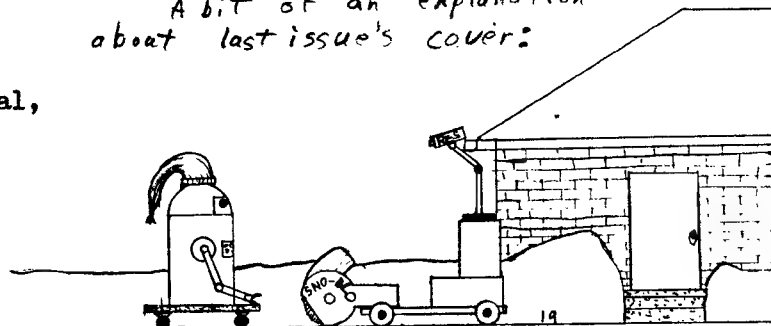
One thing about primate history is the transition from Neanderthal to Cro Magnon (that's you, kiddo). The Neanderthal was better engineered! They were bigger, with larger brains, and their musculature and skeletons, while basically similar to ours, have a number of differences, most of which are improvements. For instance, due to a shift in the attachment point of a tendon in the shoulder, your typical Neanderthal could throw a spear with a straighter motion than you typical contemporary, which means more range and killing power. And yet, their tools were more primitive than those of the Cro Magnon living at the same time. There is a distinctive change in tool sophistication as modern-type humans moved into areas. It could be that Neanderthal was too well-adapted to his environment, and simply did not use his larger brain to its fullest. Once Cro Magnon was simply out-competed, and probably absorbed into the growing human population. Neanderthal and Cro Magnon bones are often found in the same burial sites, indicating that they lived together.

The questions still remain, however, of where Cro Magnon came from (any answer mentioning birds and bees calls for immediate dismemberment). Its a common concept that humans are neotenus apes. More specifically, Cro Magnons are neotenus Neanderthals. Recalling for a moment part of last issue's material, dogs have many juvenal characteristics of wolves, such as long, silky hair and barking, making them probably neotenus wolves. Now, although you can't get a dog from a wolfe, at least not without many generations of selective breeding, wolves do make good pets if you know how to handle them. It seems reasonable, then that Neanderthals had wolves around the house.

I would sincerely like to know just when dogs first showed up, because if they are more than fifty thousand years old this next is going to sound dumb. You see, about that time Cro Magnon started showing up in scattered areas all around the world. If dogs also developed at around this time, then there is a strong likelihood of some common cause. While Neanderthal might have bred wolves into dogs, it is highly unlikely that they would have deliberately bred themselves into contemporary man. Offhand, I can think of two common causes of cross-species neotony: a nearby nova or a virus. For story purposes the second has some interesting ramifications, since viruses can be tailored. This would be a version of the old "someone is guiding us" plot, and it would be interesting to find out who would invest in such a long term project.

Well, that's just about it for this installment. I hope you will forgive me for including some non-original material, but both items following are interesting, and the one on the Viking Fund is probably justification for this whole contribution. So, I'll be back next time with some more intriguing (I hope) bits of information.

A bit of an explanation
about last issue's cover:



2

"ACTUALLY, THIS ATTACHMENT IS
THE MAIN REASON HE BOUGHT ME."

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Instructions: Read each question carefully. Answer all questions.
Time limit - 4 hours. Begin immediately.

HISTORY. Describe the history of the papacy from its origins to the present day, concentrating especially but not exclusively, on its social, political, economic, religious, and philosophical impact on Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. Be brief, concise, and specific.

MEDICINE. You have been provided with a razor blade, a piece of gauze, and a bottle of Scotch. Remove your appendix. Do not suture until your work has been inspected. You have fifteen minutes.

PUBLIC SPEAKING. 2,500 riot-crazed aborigines are storming the classroom. Calm them. You may use any ancient language except Latin or Greek.

BIOLOGY. Create life. Estimate the differences in subsequent human culture if this form of life had developed 500 million years earlier, with special attention to its probable effect on the English parliamentary system. Prove your thesis.

MUSIC. Write a piano concerto. Orchestrate and perform it with flute and drum. You will find a piano under your seat.

PSYCHOLOGY. Based on your knowledge of their works, evaluate the emotional stability, degree of adjustment, and repressed frustrations of each of the following: Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ramses II, Gregory of Nicea, Hammurabi. Support your evaluation with quotations from each man's work, making appropriate references. It is not necessary to translate.

SOCIOLOGY. Estimate the sociological problems which might accompany the end of the world. Construct an experiment to test your theory.

MANAGEMENT SCIENCE. Define Management. Define Science. How do they relate? Why? Create a generalized algorithm to optimize all managerial decisions. Assuming an 1130 CPU supporting 50 terminals, each terminal to activate your algorithm; design the communications interface and all necessary control programs.

ENGINEERING. The disassembled parts of a high-powered rifle have been placed in a box on your desk. You will also find an instruction manual, printed in Swahili. In ten minutes a hungry Bengal tiger will be admitted to the room. Take whatever action you feel appropriate. Be prepared to justify your decision.

ECONOMICS. Develop a realistic plan for refinancing the national debt. Trace the possible effects of your plan in the following areas: Cubism, the Donatist controversy, the wave theory of light. Outline a method for preventing these effects. Criticize this method from all possible points of view. Point out the deficiencies in your point of view, as demonstrated in your answer to the last question.

POLITICAL SCIENCE. There is a red telephone on the desk beside you. Start World War III. Report at length on its socio-political effects, if any.

EPISTEMOLOGY. Take a position for or against truth. Prove the validity of your position.

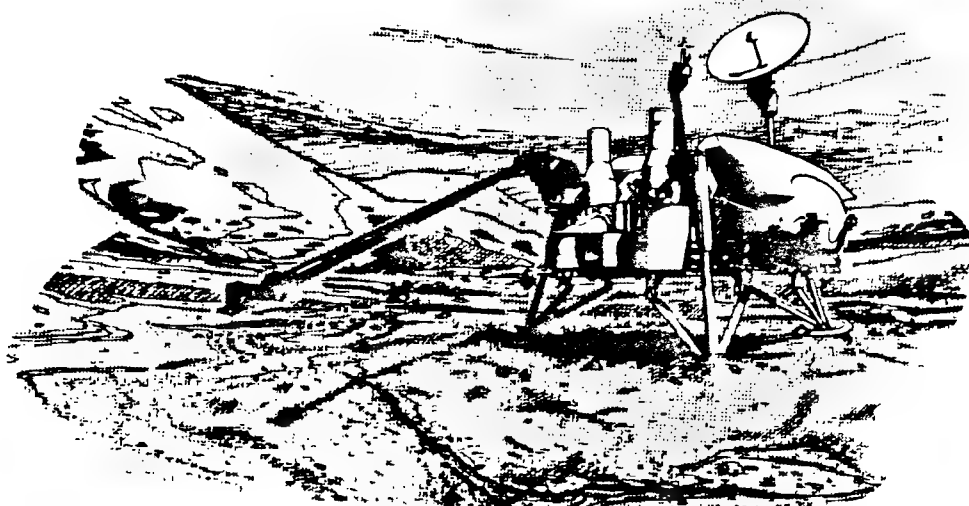
PHYSICS. Explain the nature of matter. Include in your answer an evaluation of the impact of the development of mathematics on science.

PHILOSOPHY. Sketch the development of human thought; estimate its significance. Compare with the development of any other kind of thought.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE. Describe in detail. Be objective and specific.

EXTRA CREDIT: Define the Universe; give three examples.

WANT TO EXPLORE MARS?



The Viking spacecraft is exploring Mars, and for as little as \$1 million of private funding, its robot intelligence can provide a wealth of information on which to base further explorations, and perhaps solve the riddles of Earth's weather.

Private funding is the key, and in an era of rampaging inflation and competing budget pressures, the sharing of costs between the government and private sources is desirable as a means to greatly increase the scope of explorations such as Viking. NASA intends to bring back Viking's valuable data through 1990, and a fund has been established by the San Francisco Section of the American Astronautical Society to help share this responsibility, and directly fund both private and government research into the mysteries of Mars on a year to year basis through the mechanism of a trust fund. By contributing to the Viking Fund, you can show your support for these programs, as well as help set a precedent for private funding of such space activities. The Viking Fund has as its goal the raising of \$1 million for Viking operations by July 20, 1980.

And not to be overlooked in an election year are the political implications of such a graphic demonstration of public interest in the space program. Privately raising \$1 million for a space project would be a tremendous signal to Washington D.C. of the public willingness to support space activities. The time for talking is over; it is literally time to "put your money where your mouth is," and unequivocally demonstrate your support for the space program.

If you want to explore Mars and support your space program, do not delay in making your contribution. Donations (minimum amount \$1 — made payable to the Viking Fund) should be mailed to: THE VIKING FUND, P.O. BOX 7205, MENLO PARK, CALIFORNIA 94025. All contributions are tax deductible, and all contributors will receive acknowledgement of their gift, and regular up-dates on the Fund's and Viking's progress. Also, all contributors will receive an invitation to the dedication of the Fund to NASA, in Washington D.C., during July 1980.



YOUNG AND ABROAD

in the Solar System

Copied from scraps of paper found lying around the residence of Michael Sestak, that being 130 Surf Ct #103, Houston, TX zip code 77058 and where a working phone numbered (716) 333-4158 can even occasionally be connected with.

This should be a long issue, but probably won't. It should be because a fair amount has happened around here since last I set hammer to inked ribbon. It probably won't because I have delayed till the last minute as usual. Minicon approacheth oh so rapidly.

First and foremost (probably) is that in a moment of weakness I quit being such a tightwad and went berzerk (for me) buying goodies. I now own a computer and (for the first time in my life) a stereo. The computer is an Apple II. I bought a 16k minimal system because I decided I wanted to experiment with how the thing works compared to the behemoths I've been programming for the last 8 or 9 years, before I go about destroying disk files and such. It's now up to 48K thanks to the Garb Surplus Shack and I really should have the money for a disk or two by May as I keep telling people. More on thi later if certain people aren't so fed up with apples they would throw a fit if I continued.

The stereo is a new model by Pioneer which they are test marketing through American Express. It is of the minicomponent variety (I have been interested in little else in the way of a stereo since the first advert for such I saw as I live in a small apartment, have moved a lot in the past and am threatening to move again). In fact, in essentially all dimensions, it is smaller than the parsons table I use for a stand. Yet, it consists of separate tuner and power amplifier, with a cassette deck and a fully automatic (oh how I like that, clumsy as I am at lowering a tone-arm) single record turntable and costs a bundle (but I have two years to pay and the money is already in the bank collecting interest (actually the credit union)). Almost forgot the two 18 inch three-way speakers that come with it.

IMMATURE AND FOOTLOOSE IN THE STELLAR NEIGHBORHOOD...Page Two

Further specs on the stereo will be divulged only on evidence of a show of interest.

In regard to the landsat pictures I mentioned I'd be making, as yet, they aint. The machine to make the film products uses a special CRT tube of known intensity with filters in front of it to produce the green, blue and red images. Well, that tube blew in early January. It had to be special ordered from some company in England. Calibration of the replacement began early this month (March). Then the politics began. Should it be calibrated as before, or using the information gained since about what makes crops most visible. Fortunately, the former group won, but now there is a huge backlog of production type work, so us research types are at the back of a long line. Some time this summer I should find out if my program worked.

After talking to Marty Masoglia at Penulticon, I began reading books by James P. Hogan. Say, has this fellow won any awards? Run, do not walk to the nearest ballot box and start stuffing it with his name (and if you have been as remiss as I in reading his books, get thee to a bindery (or some such)).

This is wearing thin, I haven't the time to go into things in the depth they deserve and I tire easily of hacking out glib superficial blurbs. Therefore I will finish this off with a few mailing comments and be done with it.

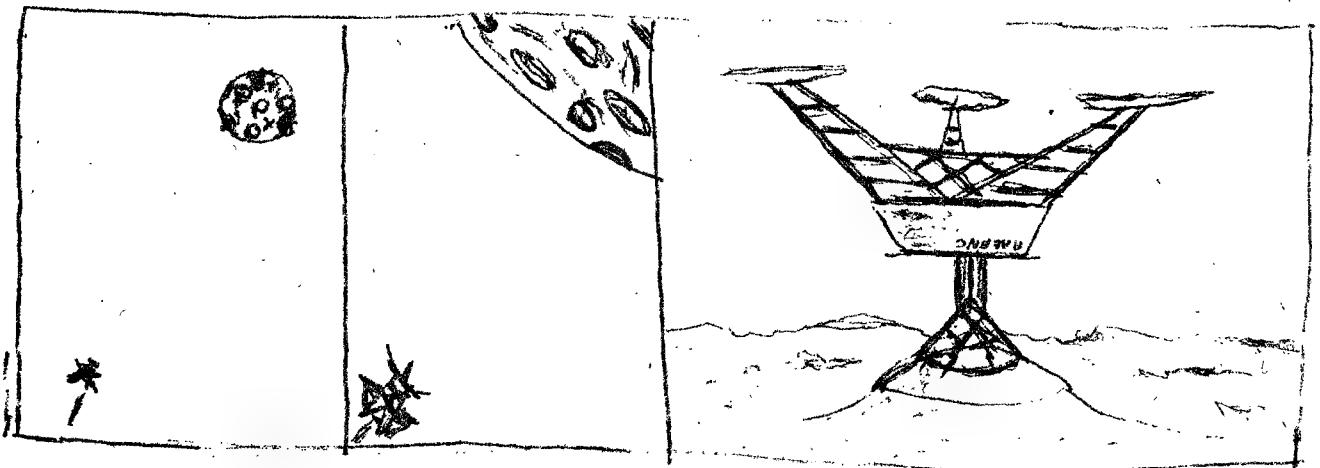
Keith I will hardly be the only one to share regrets with you.
Thorne Your including its difficulty as a reason for going into physics makes me especially sad, as (barring a couple exceptions for intolerably boring subjects) I have tended to steer toward the subjects I found the most challenging, rather than those in which I got the best grades. What's worse, some day (maybe soon) I intend to go back to school and get a PhD (as I told Renée 'as soon as I figure out what to get it in'), but I really dread taking prelims. What if I bomb out even before I start? As for the real world, etc, I don't know. I get this strange feeling I've been uncommonly lucky. After high school I went to college and contrary to what everyone had said, I had no more difficulty there than in HS and didn't have to change my study habits appreciably. After that on to graduate school and with the exception that because of research, 'school' took up much more of my time, still I noticed no major change. Then into the world of jobs and 9 to 5 and such. But no, I'm still a researcher and everyone knows (particularly the very pleasant supervisors I've had) that things come up so while I can't completely make my own hours, irregularities are overlooked as long as the work gets done sometime. I don't even get paid that much, especially living here in Houston where most other people do get big bucks. On the other hand, everyone

should spend part of their lives sampling various of the local subcultures.

To Several People From what a number of people have written, the biggest block to an electronic apa seems to be communication cost, as everyone may not have access to a computer or terminal themselves, but it seems everyone knows someone they can get to who does (I think). Ma Bell, though, tends to put a substantial burden on the undertaking. On the other hand, if memory serves me, a recent article indicated some 30 senators and congressmen are on the Source. Not that I would want an electronic version to supplant hard copy as long as it would be artless.

About the TI board, actually I very much like the potential power of the whole TM990 board series. You could put together a really powerful system with only a few cards. But TI keeps them unjustifiably expensive. Actually, since they have been second sourced, the TMS9900 and support chips have dropped dramatically in price (down to \$30 or less for the 9900) but the 990 cards and TI software are still beyond my reach. Ah well, for number crunching 8 bits and an arithmetic processor are probably just as good, maybe better. How would I know I've probably been brain damaged from programming behemoths in FORTRAN.

R. E. Smith Not a fellow pittance (lowest bid) earner, but one of those annual cost of taxpayer living increase boosters, eh, *sigh*. On the age of ice sheets and other antedeluvian matters. First, it may not be obvious from the meandering commentary I make on a wide variety of subjects in this apa, but I am supposed to be a climatologist of sorts and know things about that sort of business. I could be wrong, but somehow I rather doubt that counts of Antarctic meteorites, oxygen isotope ratios in ice cores, fossil pollen grain types can all be that far off. (But then there's the recent Science article which poses the intriguing question 'do volcanic episodes cause Ice Ages or do Ice Ages cause volcanic episodes' so who can you trust?)



Hi there, radio fans, it's time for another thrilling installment of.....

RADIO STUNTMAN

Look! He's jumping from that cliff!

Here I cocomme.....

(Sorry about that, Bill, but I was hard up for a title and lacking a little creative spark.)

////////////////////////////////////
// This APA-Tech VI contribution is being written and directed //
// by Doug Van Dorn, 7619 W. Clarence Ave., Chicago, IL 60631, //
// (312) 763-1376. Special effects not by Douglas Trumbull. //
////////////////////////////////////

COA--As you may notice, the address above differs from the one above my other entry in this APA. This address is the correct one.

Elmhurst Fandom has been forced by economic realities to relocate to Chicago, reason being my college financial aid hasn't come through and rent is tough to pay with empty pockets. Therefore, we are living in a rent-free, utilities-free environment. 'Nuff said.

However, the situation arose so fast that moving was a real adventure. On Wednesday, I found out we had to get out of the apartment, as no rent money was forthcoming. The following Saturday we started moving, and now, the Monday after, less than a week after the thought originated, we are essentially moved.

The first step was to talk all my friends (well, not all; just the crazy ones) into helping us move. Then, talk to Dick Smith, who moved most recently, as to recommended procedures.

Friday night, we looked over the basement here, where we have set up most of our old apartment. It was full of more junk than I have ever seen in any one place in my life, all coated by at least five millimeters of dust.

Saturday was the day to prepare the basement. As time went on, many of the people who were supposed to show up by 9 a.m. finally got there. The only person to actually arrive at 9 a.m. was Jerry Corrigan, who got his signals crossed and arrived at Elmhurst. We were in Chicago. He didn't call us until 1 p.m.

Dick and Valli finally got out of bed at about 2 p.m., showing up at 3. By this time, most of the junk was gone, leaving the dust. The help was appreciated in sweeping up the floors.

All this time, Bill Leininger was recuperating from a bout of stomach flu that had hit ~~conveniently~~ at 5 a.m. Saturday morning. We would hear from him later.

Sunday morning was the time to get Dick out of bed (this time he was in a sofa-bed in my Elmhurst living room, so we could be sure everyone was up and running before noon) and go to the Disreputable Van Co., the official movers of Chicagoland G_T. After a short test drive to convince me that I could, indeed, drive a van (during which I got nearly hopelessly lost in Des Plaines), the loading began.

During this period, Bill Higgins decided his neutrinos were behaving themselves and offered his body in assistance. Little did he know.....

I would like to say at this point that we have a lot of furniture that won't fit where we are now; since Dick Smith has a good-sized apartment with all of one waterbed as furniture, we offered him our sofa, dining-room table and various chairs. The perfect solution: Dick borrows some furniture for a year or two and we don't have to pay to store it or sell it, forcing us to rebuy more later.

This point becomes salient when I say that Dick lives in a third floor walk-up and the couch is very, very heavy and unwieldy. When we loaded up the Disreputable Van, then, the couch et al went in and, eventually, to Dick's.

In his Higgins-drawn COA, there is a reference to The World's Heaviest Computer Terminal belonging to Dick. Let's just say it's hard to believe it's any heavier than that couch. And, for the record, it wasn't dropped on the same foot the Twonky landed on last time. It hit the other one.

To top everything off, we were hosting the Sunday Night Supper Club, with special guest appearances by Tullio Proni and Donna Struwe, not to mention regulars like Mary Lynn Skirvin and the rest of the moving gang. That meant we had to get the basement ready for the party by 6 p.m. The van left Elmhurst for the last time at 5:30.

Bill Higgins, Jerry and Valli had gotten some \$30 worth of supplies in Elmhurst. When we got to Chicago, we found that Dick had bought another good amount of food. Then, just as the last pieces of furniture and the last boxes were unloaded, in walks a newly-recovered Bill Leininger! His flu got a whole lot better real quick, it seems.

Seriously, I don't doubt that Bill really was sick, and I understand why he wanted to come to the supper club. So, no one get any wrong ideas, please!

A note on the supper club: two weeks out of three, many of us west suburban fen (plus Dick Smith, and ex-west suburban fan, and Valli Hoski, who lives a block away from Dick) get together for an informal dinner party. It all started, oddly enough, on a Saturday when Valli wanted to cook dinner for everyone, but did it in our apartment in Elmhurst. Then, as the televising of The Martian Chronicles as an excuse, we first met on a Sunday. Since then, it has become a Great Fannish Tradition. So, if anyone is planning on being in town some Sunday night, there is a standing invitation. Just check with me, Higgins, Smith, Leininger, Corrigan or Hoski a couple of days in advance, to find out where we will be eating (and what, and what you can bring).

PRACTICAL COLONIZATION--A few weeks ago, I got into a discussion with Bill Leininger and Gretchen on the possibilities of colonizing other worlds, and how to go about it.

The point Bill and Gretchen were making was that if you want to set up an agrarian culture on a planet, the best way to do it would be present them with several thousand beasts of burden (oxen, cattle, horses) and allow the culture to develop, using age-old farming methods utilizing animal power.

I take some pretty strong exceptions to that notion. First off, it just seems to me you are putting a lot of people onto a starship and putting them off on a planet, suddenly leaving them several centuries behind the rest of humanity.

With these two provisos, we are ready to start our colony. Let's call the planet Geetee.

*edit
correct
text?*
Our first step is establishing an industrial society. We ship in equipment to start mining ore and setting up factories. The colonists oversee mainly automated equipment. These people are techieish; they have no real interest in the agrarian society.

When enough tractors, combines, threshing machines, etc., are produced, the second wave--the real colonists--arrive. With the help of the techies, they run the machines, clear the planet and live off the land. For trade purposes (the new president of Geetee likes to smoke cigars of Vegan tobacco), some produce is exported. But, befitting the agrarian aspects of the society, most inhabitants are gentleman farmers.

The industrial group has several choices. They can stay on Geetee, running the factories that make replacement plows, or they can move on to the next planet that needs industrialization before agrarian colonists move in, or they can go to an already established industrial world.

blackmail?
As you may have been able to tell, I think there is no such thing as a totally agrarian world society. Where there are people, there are people service occupations. If someone wants to visit his neighbor without spending weeks in transit (another desire that seems to have been a driving force behind certain inventions), there have to be people who make, run and repair transportation systems. Then there are the communications people, the artists and the artisans. In all, most societies end up with a mix of types in them, most of them necessary.

An industrial society would have a majority of industrial types, as does Earth today, with small numbers of people overseeing automatic farm machinery to provide food in quantities to support the population. In this case, farming would lean toward pushing yield per acre as far as it will go, as it does now. Of necessity, an agrarian society will have a smaller population and smaller overall food needs.

*reasons
for
colonization*
I take as a given that mankind has worked his way up from backbreaking, menial labor to this current industrial, mechanized society because he wanted to. Because man as a race has always desired increased leisure in which to make use of his intelligence. Because the natural tendency of an intelligent race is to develop technology to support itself. Remember, one definition of intelligence is the ability to make and use tools--in other words, the ability to create and maintain technology.

I think the point was made very well in the PBS series "Connections"--technology must go forward. If it goes backward, the society that created it and that has become dependent on it will collapse, then start again to build up technology.

You see, I'm paranoid. If push comes to shove and 99% of the people have to work like dogs to support the other 1% in a fashion I am already accustomed to, I am sure I won't be one of the upper 1%. And I abhor such tremendous inequalities. In general, the masses tend to feel the same way--just look at the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and the American Revolution. The 99% rose up to destroy the 1%, not realizing they were just putting another 1% on top, while they still starved.

Well, this is the end. See you in June!

As usual, no other zine could look anything like **Smith's CORONA**, so this must be it. **Corona** is brought to you by Dick Smith via a Datalogics super-automatic typer and duper: ~~DURESS, now renamed for marketing purposes~~ EXECUTEXT. Smith can be reached at 426 Custer #2S; Evanston, IL 60202. By phone, try home 312-864-1618 or work 312-266-4384.

The INCIDENT at WISCON

One thing which really bothered me occurred at WisCon. I was talking with Linda Lounsbury (a Mpls. fan who won DUFF last year) about the Australian stuff she was huckstering. Somehow, in conversation, we got to Linda saying, "Do you pub a fanzine that could reprint the DUFF ballot?" Then Dick, "No, but I could frank them into APA-TECH, I suppose. How about that?" Linda replies, "Well, I don't know if techies are really fans, anyway." Dick, in shock, "Huh?" As I wrote up above, this really bothered me; I don't know what (if anything) to do about it either. That woman made me feel as low as a Treckie! Is there something wrong with us?

Since the above, I've talked with various techies about General Technic's image among fans. I'm not sure what prompted Linda's offhand remark, but I'd certainly like to see her corrected.

Elsewhere in this apa is a con report by Valli (repro'd by me so I got to read it early) on WisCon. Basically, that's about what happened. Except for the incident, WisCon was as good as WisCon can be expected to be: feminism, politics, cats, sercon, sercon, sercon.

The WisCon blinkie panel: Why hasn't this ever been tried before... it really was a hit. What Rex Nelson did was put together 20 kits to make a genuine little 555-based blinky. The kit contained LED, a wirewrap socket and pre-stripped wire, capacitor, resistors, a 9-volt battery and battery connector; it sold breakeven for three dollars. The "panelists" (MaryLynn Skirvin, John

Woodford, myself) went around the room and made sure that the five wirewrap tools were kept busy, then helped debug when some units didn't work right at first. Not that the panel was perfect by any means; it drew over twice the number it could handle, technical explanations were more than somewhat lacking, and it ran two hours overtime, but every kit became a working blinkie, and the users loved it. I believe that X-Con will repeat the panel; I'll try to arrange to do it at WindyCon as well if the demand keeps up at X-Con. ((Obviously such panels appeal mostly to neos and children, at least that's what this audience looked like. Then again, isn't that what most programming is for??))

Other Thrilling Old Stuff

I had a good time at Confusion. There's a group con report here someplace about how we even enjoyed (yuk!) HoosierCon, so I won't go into that.

Famous author ~~and fringe-techie~~ Phyllis Eisenstein's first chance to be GOH died when Midwestercon folded; it had shrunk down to a one-day con before giving up. Sorry, Phyllis.

Upcoming

This zine should have been handed to Renee at MiniCon. Lots of techies. I hope my new shirt was ready in time for the big Guelour party. Thanks, Gretchen, I'm sure it's really neat!

I have already mailed money to MarCon and WhatCon, so look for me there. Both cons promise to be full of techies of all sorts. I expect a good Columbus tour at Marcon, Steve; I don't want to miss that nice Chinese grocery you described awhile back.

Beyond that, there's X-Con & MidWest-Con & Archon & Autoclave. Busy summer again! I have a conflict with X-Con as the "Chicago Semi-Pro Musica", a group that Valli, Phyllis Eisenstein, the Passavoys, Hal

Frank, and I sing with will be performing in Chicago on X-Con Sunday. We need to be in Chicago to be ready for that, and to dress rehearse on X-Con Saturday as well. I hope to be at X-Con in the evenings, anyway. You can probably get to our concert (plug!); I hope it will be late enough to allow people to get there from Milwaukee. This is the same group about which The One Shot Chorale at Noreascon II will be built (see your Noreascon P.R.3 for info).

Hopefully, there was a G_T meeting at MiniCon about scheduling berserkers; from what I hear there are going to be more berserkers offered than available weekends this summer. Everyone wants to get into the act, I guess.

In Support of an Anti-Post Office

Last ish, I pointed out that my zine would probably go to Renee via United Parcel Service; I promised a report on its performance. Simply, UPS worked out great.

I understand from Renee that my four pound package of paper arrived in Kalamazoo less than two days after I dropped it at the UPS office in Chicago. The cost was \$1.31 versus \$2.47 for slower Priority Mail. A bargain — use it!

((Of course, this ish, I'm saving even more money by handing the four pound package to Renee at MiniCon.))

Miscellaneous

Chuck Ott will join Datalogics soon after publication time. If you thought we were fannish before, just wait....

Regards my job, my terminal hardware is working. I've started on software to run inside the terminal; it needs to be ready by the time parts come in to build more units. Bill Leininger saw the prototype run; ask him about smooth scrolling with 'momentum' if you want to hear how strange a terminal can be with just a little extra software inside.

My car broke a clutch cable out in Chicago's western burbs not too long ago. Thanks, Doug Van Dorn, for rescue and help pushing it to where I could come back later (thanks, Valli, for the loan of your car) to replace it. I keep learning more about cars this way; I continue to hope to have this car last another year. See me in person for the story about "junkyarding" for clutch parts.

MAILING COMMENTS on APA-TECH #5

Nothing in.. ..Garb out (postmail too late for last time): Um, what do we have to do to get you to travel out this way once in a while. You've informed me that the comment a couple of issues back about your east & west coast traveling wasn't quite correct, but, we'd sure like to see you. AmberCon conflicts with X-Con (in Milwaukee) which will probably draw most of us from this area; I have another conflict myself, and will miss both cons (altho I may make X-Con evenings). You'd better be at MiniCon like you promised! You'd better have a real submit to APA-TECH!! (I'm sorry I'm starting to sound like Renee.)

I'm glad you like ZORK... I'm a master myself if you need help. I have the DEC version (binary only) someplace if anyone wants it. It's quite addictive. Be careful of the Frobozz Magic Burgler Alarm... an easy section to get killed in... and be careful on the boat-ride... that last step is a lulu....

Cover: Yes.

555 Times: I hate the name APA-RATUS! I have so voted. APA-TECH is still the best I've name I heard yet.

I have alot more trouble with the "grace period" question... I suggest that the deadline be very firm, but we might consider moving it a little bit away from the first of the month. That way, those slackers (like myself?) who have trouble getting done on the first could still pretend it was still due then, and they would be on time. I really like the delay for MiniCon weekend; that will save all of us lots of postage, and probably get the zines in on time. It would be a

good thing, Renee, if you could stretch deadlines up to conventions more often.

What is APA-TECH's policy on new members? Are we requiring them to be stampsent-in members of G, or what? I'm not sure that this has ever been spelled out clearly. G.T.B., would you comment, please?

Quintessential: Very nice battery ads, etc.

Mostly RAEBNCH with regard to the record discussion. I have fond old memories of the Fireside Theater stuff....

Dr. Gonzo's: Lousy repro again, dammit (and you gave me credit). Yes, I'll show you how to use the typesetter.... You'd better read the rest of Niven's stuff if you're going to hang around with techies who refer to it all the time... Hal Clement, too.

In re yr ct me: yes, that is the way life has always worked, but I don't have to like it.

Is it possible that you can't write a whole sentence? I have alot of trouble with your run-on style writing... you use lots of ellipsis... you know, those dots... and sometimes runallthewordstogether for no good reason that I can see. Much of the time, when you're doing this, what you're writing with that particular style doesn't make much sense to an outside observer. Anyway, maybe everyone else likes it, but I have trouble. Sorry!

Transporter Topics: I like your cover; fortunately, the snow hasn't been that bad this year (yet?).

Don't miss the future VanDaniken book "Terraformers of the Gods"! That will probably be enough to convince you that Mars couldn't have been terraformed.

In re yr ct Bill: What's a Snit? I haven't read or don't remember??

Outer darkness: Not too bad for just something. ~~Don't you dare compare my zine with yours for stupidity!~~

Off the Top: It's alot harder to comment to people you see alot, isn't it. For the record (in re yr ct me), I like donuts; everyone

should have donuts! There. Basso, yes, profundo, maybe.

You agreed with me in re the Business ~~Uniform~~ Suit. If Keith is joining the real world soon, he'll find out. Mind, now, I rather like wearing suits, sometimes. I will never appear as a Jeff Duntemann lookalike, tho!

No one here would think of forcing anyone into microprocessors... just because micros are the only thing some of us talk about ~~besides sex~~.

Corona: Nice art. Thanks again, Bill.

Fan Mail from some Fish: ~~Glad the brown stains didn't repro (Awright, back to last ish for a quick reread to make sense of this one!).~~ Once more, dear friends, on to the, uh, uh, for the record, I don't need to deny such ~~tripe~~ rumor as is presented in this typical lowlife oneshot. I couldn't have done any of that stuff, anyway... I'm sure I was someplace else at the time.

It sure looks that the Sunday Supper Club is getting rather regular. I think I can take the liberty of inviting anyone passing thru.... ((Since I wrote the above, we had Tullio, MaryLynn, Donna, Angel show up all at once.))

A Demon of the 2nd: There's no sense in trying to implement an online version of a conventional apa; the turnaround is too fast unless you (or the cost of access) deliberately restrict it. I already wrote that I liked PLATO notefiles, however, Greg is right about the ~~drivel~~ that gets in....

APA-G is ok. Only ok, tho.

In re yr ct me: **Aw cum on now!** A commercial instruction set (or what a computer vendor ~~thinks~~ is a commercial instruction set) is extensions to the regular instructions of the processor which are oriented toward commercial applications. Specifically, things like string-move, decimal-arithmetic, and COBOL-edit are the usual fare in a commercial instruction set. Other processors have these built in already (eg. the IBM 360/370/etc. or DEC's VAX), and if you look at their instruction sets, you can see the instructions which were added to make them "commercial". Consider the kind of

opcodes you would want if you were writing the COBOL compiler; that's a commercial instruction set.

The Two Shot: I still have trouble finding Tab A & Slot B. Perhaps I should be using a flashlight? And what about the grapes??

Roses to Deaden: I agree with your praise of Damon Knight's old In Search of Wonder. Lots of good data, also funny.

I nominated Pyro for fanzine Hugo, and tried to spread the word, too. One thing that got me started is the fact that there's a sort of nasty-feminist fanzine which advertises itself as "twice Hugo nominated". I can't deny that Janus is a pretty good zine, but still! We can certainly do just as well.

In re yr et me: Y rot so re zmu unit no enode kohma eb.... Et acinum mocot dnet ni I yaweh tto nsis iht. (((Or don't you remember the most famous of the Prof. Augustus F. S. X. VanDusen stories.)))

Tales of Woe...: Um, um, what can we say, do, to help. The mundane world really isn't too bad, but.... Let us know what you need.

In re yr et me: I'm afraid Datalogics is doomed to be quite fannish. Thanks (about Valli & I)!

Yes, it looks like we'll have the draft back. Of course it's fair that the intelligent ones are spared the front lines (it's about the only chance that modern war has to improve the breed, if I don't sound like good ol' RAH myself.), but can you really believe that the military can overcome its traditional disregard for draftees qualifications? I think the way to keep the draft from ever being used is to make sure that women are included equally; that doubles the number of concerned potential draftees, not to mention their outraged, unliberated, mothers; etc. ((Valli got really angry at me when I suggested affirmative action for women with regard to the draft... after all, they've missed out on the chance to serve for the last century....))

You're not the only WASP in G; I qualify, at least by training. I may have grown out of it by now... it's really not hard to escape history. I think various others qualify, too; I have trouble telling about the P part.

Around the World: Once more, yes, Renee, we had a really nice time at IsherCon. I know I won't forget. The fate of the balloon seemed quite appropriate.

Renee, I wasn't sure at all about the mass driver project; it seemed to me that it might be a colossal waste of energy (both human & electrical). You have, however, provided the one really good reason I've seen to embark on such a project: G may need to reemphasize that it isn't just a social group, but made up of genuine techies. (* Mass driver organizers can therefore count on me for any appropriate sucker job.... *)

I won't bother to suggest Hustler as the place to advertise the Model X. Will there always be a market? Is there one now?? It's hard to tell from outside if Isher makes a mint or just barely stays afloat.... 2 out of 3 were working at outside jobs last time I checked; is that an indicator?

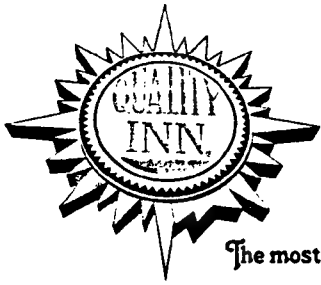
In re yr et MuBetan: I'll bet that Mike tries to guess who wrote The Two Shot and gets that wrong too. ((Not me, Mike.))

Mineral Statistics: What sort of name for an apazine is this anyway...? This is what held up the apa for so long???

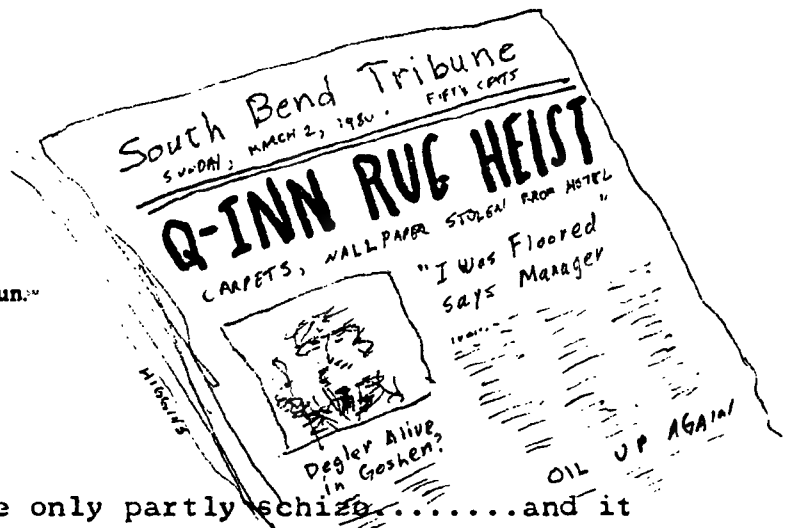
Programs which hyphenate text are quite a bit of work. Datalogics ~~brags about~~ promotes their software (which is going to auto-hyphenate this after I get it typed in) quite heavily, and charges alot of money for it. It's not as simple to divide syllables as you might think.

Sorry, nothing to argue about regarding Asimov & religion. Is this supposed to be controversial? I think you mean to say that there may be religious fakers (eg. People's Temple type cults?) extant now; this is as hard to disagree with as it is to demonstrate.

That's enough for now. See you all. Ed



The most comfortable place...under the Sun."



But then some of us are only partly schizo.....and it is the Sunday Night Supper Club spewing forth reminiscences of the scarcely old and scarcely occurred Hoosiercon I (you bet it scarcely occurred).

Naked walls, naked floors, naked ceilings, but no naked women, or so a few of us heard a neo lament. Well, at least the hot water worked. But cuddle squads are now requested to be moved from Confusion to Hoosiercon. Please. I am tired of freezing running up and down those frozen stairwells and hallways. Wait. That's it!! This actually wasn't a con at all, or at least not an original one, just one doing a clever imitation of, hm, lets count now, Confusion, NorthAmeriCon, ChambanaCon, et. al.

((Break for Uncle Dick's Chinese Glop.....))

Uncle Dick's Chinese Glop was good, and the obligatory fortune cookies were all predictably positive, except for Valli's, which read, "Don't speculate in new ideas at the cost of your reputation." She says she knew she shouldn't have swung from that chandelier in South Bend.

Back to the report. Contrary to popular opinion, this is not being written in the elevator while it is moving from the first to ninth floors, nor is it being written while waiting for the elevator. Nor, indeed, is it being written in the stairwell, since, if that were so, my fingers would be so stiff with the cold I couldn't type (and besides, they would be sticking to the keys).

Hm, perhaps the most succinct comment to be made about the con was its accute presence of GT persons. Perhaps this was to be a GT pseudo-event (alright I will succomb to the remark that this was a pseudo-con, but it wasn't all that bad.) Anyway, the masses gathered from the far East (Kazoo) and the far West (West Chicago) and the far North (Houghton) and far South (Chambana).

Chicago area fen, some of them (basically a lot of the Supper Club) decided to congregate at the Van Dorn shack in Elmhurst, for reasons of centrality to all parties and proximity to the tollway.

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Also, if the great plot to get the Van Dorns to the con hadn't been hatched, this could have resulted in great amounts of mental anguish for them. For more details of this great adventure, read Doug's contribution to this APA.

One who left on Friday will now report on how SOME of us got there. Or almost didn't. Those coming from Chicago area or north or there ran into a small (well, OK. LARGE) problem called "snow". I was planning to leave at 1:00. But there were these ominous weather reports about tons of snow that were being dumped on Chicago and it got worse as you went south. And most of us had to go south to get to South Bend. I dithered about whether or not to go until 3:30, and then packed an emergency survival kit and left anyway. Rt. 294 was clear and almost dry to Alsip, where it started snowing. By the Cal Sag Canal the road was slushy and slippery and traffic was down to 35 mph., but still moving at least. At the Indiana State line, someone turned off the faucet and suddenly the road was dry again. It took me a half hour longer than it should have, but was nowhere as bad as the weather reports said. Unless you talked to someone who came from Milwaukee by way of the Chicago Skyway. They had several unprintable words to say about the weather. But I noticed one thing; no one canceled because of it.

((Break back to the Sunday Night Supper Club--Gerald Corrigan just uttered THAT word--ORGY!!))

((It has just been requested that the real Gerald Corrigan please sit down, soooo...))

My experience with the roads was just about the same as described above, so no more of that. After registering, we promptly gathered a group of people to head to Barnaby's for dinner. Todd Johnson freaked out a mundane by bringing his laser with him. He kept asking "What is that thing doing here?" Bill Leininger's explanation that "He couldn't leave it in the hotel, could he?" didn't seem to satisfy the fellow.

((Quick break back to the Supper Club... for all you egoscanners looking for your names we here provide them: tullio-greg-bill-renee-keith-alice-jamie-donna-rod-mike-alex-doug-bill-michelle-bill-bill-bill-bill-bill-bill-and-goodoldsweetness.))

Guess you could say that Todd made the folks at Barnaby's see red.....ARGH!! Quick!! Turn the page, don't touch that dial!

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The most comfortable place...under the Sun."

Back to con central.....

The filksing was about the only thing going on Friday night, I am competently informed, most revelers being more in the mood to sing than to party. Also, when your guest of honor is a self-styled king of the filksong scene, it is politic to emphasize this fanac early in the con.

With Bob Asprin trying valiantly to live up to his SCA Yang the Nauseating persona by giving 20 minute introductions to three minute songs and Juanita Coulson entertaining all those filksong fans who had not yet arrived at the con--I think she was facing the windows, using their large surface area as vibrating panels to extend her range--Friday night wound down, the con waiting for further members to arrive.

Saturday morning began with a "feepfeepfeepfeep" from Dick Smith's watch. We're back in Elmhurst again, at 8 a.m., getting ready to pull the coup and head for the con unexpected.

Dick had insisted we get going early, so as not to miss the GT pool party he had ordered to occur at 2 p.m., funny time (EDT). Everyone had less than the regulation 8 hours that night, and the trip started in the snowy conditions described by those arriving Friday. After missing the tollway cutoff and travelling through scenic Indiana realizing why people make Hoosier jokes, we finally arrived, to immediately discover the pool was "temporarily out of service. Sorry for the inconvenience."

Next came the registration table. Instead of the normal run of fan manning it, there appeared to be somebody's mom sitting behind the table, pronouncing "science fiction" like she had a translation manual from English to Fannish stashed somewhere. You know, the cool, competent person you remember packing your lunch with a scowl and a warning. All in all, not a very promising (or fannish) start to the con. Remember, this was before any of us saw anything beyond the lobby.

Thus began the GREAT SEARCH FOR WILLIAM SKEFFINGTON HIGGINS & COMPANY which was to take up most of Saturday afternoon and evening to finally show forementioned folks that INDEED we had arrived!! Some other activities which occurred as mere accompaniment to the Great Search were checking out all of the con activities, which took all of two hours, and attending a programming event, which took another hour. Then a radio pseudo-event followed (or was that a pseudo-radio event) organized (if anything can be called organized in fandom obviously) by Bill Hainley. So much for conac.

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Dinner was organized in a similiar fannish manner, chaotic but no one starved in the process. Barnaby's was taken over again, sans the presence of Todd and his laser. As a matter of fact, the dinner company was rather tame, I am sad to say. *Sigh* Those mundanes had it too easy. Its-pile-back-into-the-car-time-and-return-to-the-con-again.

((Break for the continuing saga of Bill Higgins and his flying car hood. K-Mart's of Elmhurst are now the recipients of a mysterious gift in their trash pile. For more details, contact Higgins, Smith, or Leininger. Who, us? Denials shall be swift and speedy. But then Smith is always trying to deny his exploits!!))

Ah, fanac, fanac, what would I do without.....

Oh, sorry, just caught me verbalizing my thoughts there, as it were. Anyway, back to the con, a last check on the art show has shown that Gretchen's three mini-dragons all have hefty bids on the bid sheets, and will appear at the auction later. I set the auction--slated for 10 p.m.--firmly on my schedule, then set off looking for the scarce Higgins again.

At the GT party at 8:30, except Mike and Alice just showed up (the party is supposedly in their room), telling of the attempts of the rest of GT to have dinner. Seems they had to bow out of the group that went to Mom's Home Cooking Emporium, or whatever, due to financial concerns. Mike says the Big Boy across the street has just ruined that chain's reputation by serving a truly great meal for a reasonable amount of money.

Anyway, due to these face-stuffing problems, no one was back from dinner yet and no supplies had yet been collected. The costume show was continuing apace downstairs, with some well-done Pigs In Space costumes hogging all the glory and BSG and ST-TMP costumes blitzing second place. As the costume competition started at 9 a.m., I was amazed when the place was empty at 9:30 and the art auction starting, on time, at 10.

While the auction was going on, Gretchen and Alice made an attempt to get the party going by running out to get supplies. Gretchen had to borrow Angel's coat because the door to our room was locked, the Do Not Disturb deadbolt set. (Later, Dick and Valli showed up again for the first time after dinner, having made up from their last disagreement, but far be it for me to make any connections.)

While on their way to the Scottish or Irish liquor emporium, our two heros saw some of South Bend while getting acquainted with

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one-way streets. After a harrowing escape, seven flights of subzero stairs and some general confusion (requiring a bypass to Ann Arbor?), they came back to the room and found it--empty.

No, we haven't found the South Bend Triangle (though some people would like to see the Q-Inn disappear from the face of the earth forever). The party had moved from 702, where the door had been propped open, to 703, where it hadn't. For a few moments, it seemed mutiny had taken place, the party being waylaid to a place of warmer stairs and working elevators.

While all this was going on, two of Gretchen's dragons were sold into happy homes, collecting \$25 between them. She walked in just in time to see the last one, an iridescent cutie, asleep with its little head tucked under its wing, go, in a heated auction, for all of \$30. I don't know who was bouncing more--me, her or Valli. (Make that jumping more, as Gretchen and Valli definitely have more to bounce!!)

Story-of-the-con: to be told later.

Wanderings began as the GT sing gets later. Bob Asprin is heard to sing a few and tell a few. Moonwolf vocalizes in a similiar manner to a MOST appreciative audience (of both vocal and physical talents...) Juanita, well, melodizes in her own unique style. Back up and down those frigid stairwells and some well appreciated attempts at impromptu cuddle squads. Hm, group consensus at this point seems to indicate that a lot of searching for parties was going on, with dubious success. Movies were checked out with no-or-very-little-interest-features on the screen (and the back row). Gretchen is proud of her new musical skill as a tunable-jug-player. (Get your mind out of that gutter!! She said JUG!!) Bill Higgins is still the noble balladeer, with Mr. Colsher being the demented balladeer when he claims the title. And it is back to watching the hall walls peel. Well, probably time to crash anyway.

NOW is the story-of-the-con: While making a queen-size bed into medium commodius sleeping accomodations for four, the party in 619 found, hidden exactly in the middle of the bed, a copy of the December, 1979 issue of Playboy magazine. Honest-to-Cthuluhu-Bacchus-or-whomever-you-prefer, it was there, just waiting for some poor innocent GT person to be corrupted by its presence. Well, not being fools, we looked at the pictures (boring), read some of the copy (boring), wondered at some of the jokes (boring), and followed the directions. (The earlier reference to the Do Not Disturb sign was most likely the maid engaging in the act of hiding this piece of dubious distinctive technical literature.)

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And, tactfully, it is Sunday morning, with the wake-up call. Do you really want the details of four slightly groggy fen of the various sexes scrambling for the shower, clothing, packing and trying to remain reasonably polite to each other while still dead from the night before? Well, contact someone for the lurid details (I just wish someone would tell me). And some hugging going on, yes. Down to the lobby....where we meet Mr. Doug Van Dorn. Good morning Doug, fine looking crowd we have assembled here isn't it?

What Valli doesn't point out is the phone call we had to make to get her and Smith out of the room, and the second phone call 10 minutes after they said they'd be down in two minutes. It wouldn't have made any difference except there were all people waiting to go out for breakfast, and we were all starving to death. (Starving for food, she asks innocently....)

And the con continues. (The fannish adventure is just beginning?) After finishing the breakfast at a restaurant most of the way across South Bend, many of us headed back to Elmhurst, where everyone left his/her/its car. Since the rest would be getting here at around dinner time, it was only obvious that the next installment of the Sunday Night Supper Club should meet. Thus, the con is still going, even as I finish up this fanac. We're down to five now in numbers, but what we lack in numbers is certainly made up for in intensity. Witness a six page team-written con report.

This week, we added Karen Pauli to the group, having discovered a few weeks ago she lives 10 minutes away, in LaGrange Park. We hope her and her fire lizard can make it to some more of these. We may even be able to eventually techiate her.

Many comments were going around at the con, to the effect of, "Get something to remember this HoosierCon by. There will never be another one." I hope this isn't true. The fans make the convention, and they can have a good time just about anywhere, even in this rather small apartment in Elmhurst. The hotel problems (most of the problems the con had) would be solved by a different hotel, and the time and place of this con make it worth another try.

Well, until we have cause to try another of these things, this is the official Sperry UniQuack tech rep, saying, Watch Out for Quantum Ducks!! (Quark! Quark!)

((And remember techies nave....))

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Courtesy Light Gallery



Dr. Gonzo's Epicyclic Effluvium
March/April 1980
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who may occasionally be found at 621 Hull Terrace, #1W, Evanston IL 60202 when not in attendance at cons or any other fannish event (scheduled or non-scheduled)

For your bemusement, amusement, and wonder, this illustrious publication is perpetrated and silliness perpetuated all in the grandiose name of **General Technics**

To tantalize your wit and increase your trivial knowledge, I offer for your perusal and perchance comment the following definitions of this issue's title:

epicycle = a small circle moving on the circumference of a larger circle moving around the earth, in Ptolemaic terms.

effluvium = an imaginary outpouring of imponderable radiation or invisible vapor

Or, this month, brought to you by the courtesy of Datalogics and Dick Smith, is a cyclic, albeit imaginary, outpouring of imponderables.

Sometimes I surprise even myself, as the above definitions can state my philosophy on my presence in GT. Suffice to say, that I do not view myself as a central force in GT (or central personality, although some may argue the validity of ANYONE being central in GT), but rather as merrily and circuitously travelling along with some marvelously stimulating, polite, gentle and random personas that inhabit GT. The effervescent reactions that my mind (and intellectual curiosity) displays when I am engaged in most discussions with the above personas are an effluvium of childish awe and adult wonder at the magic of what everyone else knows and does. From my earlier philophical and educational background in the humanities, I have a fine apreeciation, and sometimes understanding even, of the art, architecture, music, and history of the various and sundry epics of Western civilization. My knowledge and use of computers is not a logical or clearly discernible flow, but rather an interest and skill gained intuitively and by feel rather than by hard analysis. That is why I am attempting to reconcile my conflict of interests and perhaps even be successful at finding my place in instructional development and educational computing. But that is the story of another year....If anyone ever feels the need to have someone's eyes grow large with amazement at technological magic, just find me wandering out there somewhere. So, maybe I am actually beginning to understand conceptually what has happened all these times when I have hit RETURN. But I still have a lot of unanswered "WHY does it do that???"s. (Thanks for all the napkin lectures over dinner, Dick; you've done more for explanations of natural phenomena than any of my natural science teachers did. What is that extra hydrogen molecule? Just an extra jalepeno seed....)

Celluloid Kisses Time

Simon — A thoroughly entertaining, diverting and enjoyable movie which was a pleasantly unplanned event. At last, a movie that went beyond technically splashy special effects to offer a witty and gently sarcastic opinion of today's world. The naivete of Simon after he is nurtured in a womb environment by a thinktank institute is not wholly painful. Abolition of Hawaiian music in elevators, a commandment requiring politicians to wear party hats and other effective tactics against society's petty annoyances all are sheer brilliance. The humor is not scathing, but uproarious occasionally, nonetheless. Simon is a gentle, wise, intelligent film that leaves hope for subtle, non-flashy s.f. films.

Linear Singularity

The Starship and the Canoe / Kenneth Brower — In a momentary breather from all the fiction that I have o.d.ed myself on within the past few months, I was delighted to find the tale of the father and son Dysons. Hugs to Bill Higgins for recommending it to me, as this

Dr. Gonzo's Epicyclic Effluvium
(2)

tale is fascinating. Brower's style is very reminiscent of McPhee's highly descriptive narrative, and just as spell-binding. The similarities, conflicts and individualities between Freeman Dyson, the senior, and George Dyson, the younger, all are carefully drawn with empathetic portrayal of their diverse, but dynamic personalities. Highly recommended for everybody everywhere.

Report forthcoming on Freeman Dyson's Disturbing the Universe, when my local public library gives me my turn at borrowing it.

Wanderings at 4 AM and No Backrubs Time

ConFusion....sighsighsigh....can ths really be ConFusion without any snow??....what is this?....and everyone is here again, just like Chambanaccon....anyone who is anybody to me is here....so that is a lot of hugs and hugs and really nice back rubs....the beginnings of velourfandom from Ishercon are coalescing now....and some very nice people are very cuddly....and all the rest of the details have gone to that Great Con in Galaxy.....

Hoosiercon....for details see the Sunday Night Supper Club Collective Report....but those floors were cold....and GT made the con for me and a whole lot of other folks....

Wiscon....for details see the Madison Inn Report....but the rest of GT was sadly and immensely missed by the few GT present...

Miscellaneous Milwaukee Adventures....yes, there is life in them thar nothern parts....just want to add that a good time is possible in the town that stews and brews....some rather entertaining and intelligent personas reside up there and miscellaneous adventures concerning lasagna, hissing cats and neat old houses occurred there between some Milwaukee and Evanston fen....a great place to get away from Chicago to...hint,hint,hint mebbe we should hold Sunday Night dinner there sometime folks.....

Minicon.....guess that I will see/catch/hug most of you there as I managed to get an obligatory holiday visit home done the weekend before Easter with the connivance, er I mean help, of a friend of mine....the absence of certain GT bandersnatch and cohorts in disguise will be sadly noted and missed.....

allright, all right, more later from the ludicrous and more than slightly gonzo shores of Chicago fandom.

Egoscanner's Corner

Quintessential Singularity.... Greg, I happened to be talking to my friendly local Bell and Howell distributor about Apples, and he said that someone in his shop managed to overcome signal output problems and managed to videotape some programs running.... Those are all the details that I know, but I have the appropriate person's name and phone if you would like for me to find out more details....I thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the physical appearance of your zine, thanks for providing some visual stimulation...

Transporter Topics....to settle all disputes, that is Renee in the collating party at Windycon picture, not me.

Outer Darkness....that is ok, Donna...deadlines and missing them get to be a fact of life in fandom sometimes (I say, as I sit and try and finish this zine on the Monday before Minicon when I should be home and packing or some other foolishness...) besides it is good to just have you in Apa-Tech anyway.

Headtop....All right Doug, all right....I hope that the legibility of this zine meets your needs....apologies for the general illegibility of the previous issues but I couldn't complain about a free printer, could I?....'sides, I have this fascination with the Datalogics typesetter anyway.

Dr. Gonzo's Epicyclic Effluvium
(3)

Smith's Corona....thankyouthankyouthankyou for your time and effort with this issue....should have a MUCH better repro this time.... my con reports are rather, well, impressionistic....some vagaries are better left vague....but if I want to be detailed I can be, just read the Sunday Night Collective Report and you'll see....as for some OTHER details, just come and find me and I will be glad to explain them....you give really good napkin lectures/explanations.... over dinner or whatever....

A Demon of the Second Kind....oh, Bill, you make me homesick for PLATO when I read about the system's notesfiles....damndest best notes system I have ever seen....of course, I spent more time in term: talk than I did entering code at times....and your zine looked really nice too.... was nice having your company at DL when you were putting that zine together and I was trying to finish that slide/tape show....what do you mean I WON'T spare you the lurid details??....do you REALLY want them??....do you have any idea how difficult it is to keep up an image, let alone try and keep reality up to those performance standards?

The Two Shot....RAEBNC....um, well, at least it was tactfully done.

RtDtCATF....same comment as to Doug and Dick, I hope that this issue's repro better suits you....aw, gosh, wow, blush, you sing really nicely.

TftCS....thanks as to et:re Dick....you, sir, are the undisputed champion of velourfandom on Chicago Thursday nights....it is VERYVERYVERY nice to see you there (sorry, CHUS-FA)....do you REALLY have pc board etchings??....

Around...800 Days....Renee, I said it in A-T5, but it still holdsthankyouthankyou so very much for Ishercon....one of the best New Year's that I had for a good many years....hopefully maybe even be there next year....and an excellent report....would you mind telling the story of the traditional origin of mylar sometime... and I think your idea for a genuine techie teaching beserker has my full enthusiasm and support....which way is the electronics kludge?

The Usual MuBetan....highly interesting commentary on pg. 2 as I have just finished The Canticles of Leibowitz....and thoroughly visually pleasing layout....

More ludicrous and lascivious erratica later....try and have a cuddly and romantic spring....hug a velour fan tonight.

cover credits

Romanticism and technology. "Almost all my photographs involve people—their emotions, attitudes, neuroses" reports Larry Williams. He documents contemporary psychological climates using technology that probably contributed to their creation. This picture is from a series called "La Suite d'Ennui." "I photographed women around me who seemed bored, depressed, fed-up. I chose to print these with photo emulsion which I coated on graph paper. . . . I felt the lines in the graph paper suited the "flatness" of the emotional state of ennui and that the soft emulsion edges were also somehow appropriate." The print was then reproduced with a Xerox color copier to add unexpected colors and heighten contrast. "This photograph happened between sets while I was working in my studio on a magazine job. The model was walking around in a meditative way, seeming somewhat depressed. She wandered in front of the camera and I just turned around from what I was doing and snapped, making use of the flash that was already set up." Sunpak 611 with umbrella and separate reflector fill. Canon FX with 50mm f/1.8 Canon lens, 1/30 sec. at f/16 on Tri-X.



Madison Inn

On Campus/601 Langdon St./Madison, WI 53703/(608) 257-4391
Wiscon 4, as told by Valli, or

FEAR & LOATHING IN MADISON

Sex....politics.....feminism.....cats.....
Where could this be but Wiscon?? And what do
you do at Wiscon if, say, you are an aficionado
of only one of the above four? (Not saying
which of the four as this is a techie APA, and
we all know that techies have no... (oh no,
not that line again....) of course, would this
be a con report without that line?)

Ahem, alright, back to the con report.
Well folks, perhaps it can be best (and succinctly)
stated by the obvious lack of presence of some
of GT's most illustrious members....(alright, it
is ego-boo scan time again) Bill, Bill, Bill,
Angel, Doug, Gretchen, Rene, Tullio, Alex, Alice,
Mike, Keith, Cap'n Al, Todd, Greg, Rod, Donna,
Gordon, et. al.) This unfortunate circumstance
forced the few GT members attending to spend a
desolate Saturday "in search of someone or
something that was left behind". And trying to
wander through the convention hotel(s) in
Madison is truly a desolate affair with snow and
freezing cold. But a few stouthearted souls made
their own version/rendition of "Benson, Arizona"
and "Motie Engineers" to entertain themselves and
a few other motley souls. But that was before
THE event of the con.....

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(What a devious device just to get you to turn the page!!)

Do you really want to hear about the drive from Chicago to Milwaukee conducted in true Dick Smith style? Or that the Smithian time/space relationship actually worked to someone's advantage (remarkable!)?? Or do you even want to hear the lurid details about the drive from Milwaukee to Madison in which same Smith had two sleeping femme-tech to entertain him?? What is that a roar of "we are techies, and techies have...." from the audience? All right, fine, let the curtain draw on these lonely ~~con-~~ ~~fer-~~ ~~en-~~ until the arrival in Madison.

ATTENTION: lest there be rumors that the Wiscon hotel has stopped screwing up the reservations let it be known, hear ye, hear ye, that said ~~dis-~~ ~~re-~~ ~~put-~~ ~~able~~ institution is continuing its ~~leg-~~ ~~en-~~ ~~dary~~ legendary custom of overbooking even twice confirmed reservations!

The late Friday night conac pursued by our stalworthy souls find them vainly in pursuit of the other Chicago souls rumored to have made this con. Finally, amusements were self-made in various exploits with a noble and friendly fan from that great Bozo bus in the sky, Rick Gellman. Ask us about the chicken sometime.... And the beds' size and the bathroom size and the room size gave me mental cramps, but for all of us in Lowell Hall, it

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enabled us all to relive our undergraduate memories of those narrow dorm beds.... Ahem.

Saturday morning brings not much else but THE event....promised 1 page ago! The Build Your Own Blinkie panel proved to be one of the more entertaining and crowded programming events of the weekend. Our illustrious crew of Mary Lynn Skirvin, Rex Thomas Nelson, Richard H. E. Smith II, John Woodford & a cast of millions gave a stunning performance in their amusing tales of capricious capacitors, rambunctious resistors, flippant 555 timers, sensuous sockets, and blushing batteries....betcha you never knew that you could diddle with a wirewrap tool like that before!! Two hours later and captive souls were still hypnotically transfixed by their very own blinkie....plaitive cries for "make it go faster, faster, please!" were even overheard (for LED's, uhuh!) Let us fade out on this subversive and subliminating techie triumph....

Lightly tripping over Saturday afternoon which only was anticlimactic after the blinkie escapade....let us sing high praises of the Madison establishment known as "Ella's", hallelujah, hallelujah!! Any what glory, what bliss, what unknown delights lie buried in toasted pound cake, dribbles of hot fudge sauce and untraversed mounds of vanilla....sigh, be thou calm my stomach and cease thy bounds of lascivious delight...



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(Sorry for getting carried away....just ask for toasted pound cake with whatever your fantasies can concoct and Ella's will help some of your-most-inner-secret-hidden-away-where-even-Santa-Claus-can't-see-them ice cream cravings come true!!)

Sigh, Saturday night did see a loyal and valiant attempt at a GT sing with the few who were there with songbooks and a few who came to the GT-party-by-the-elevator...but it just wasn't the same without Bill and his ukelele (but we all know it is a bandersnatch cleverly disguised as a ukelele!) or Bill and his guitar (but we all know it is BYL cleverly disguised as a guitar!)....so we doff our antlers in tribute to the masters of the GT sing....

Sunday found the intrepid travelers walking out on the con and going on the "Dick Smith ~~WALK~~ Drive Down Memory Lane Tour of U-W-Madison And Environs"....for more details consult Smith and ask for stories.....especially ask him about his new hat....it is a very nice hat....given by a person with exquisite taste....and he looks very nice in it....(no silly, I don't mean he looks nice in just the hat...although he might....but enough is enough)....thank you Chairman Mao for the latest in this year's fannish fashions....



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For an interesting brunch, try the Fess in downtown Madison....has rather good quiche and a remarkable looking chicken liver omelet. Although I confess to liking Mel Markon's Sunday brunch more....but then I adore Honeydew melons anyway....

Back on the road again, and again the delights of Milwaukee, sleeping femme on the highway (Dick you have got to do something about your image!!), and not much more can be said except that all of the Sunday night supper club were sorely missed....sigh, a con just doesn't cohere with the charm and strangeness of GT bonds....and hughughug, it was nice to be back with the GT folks in Chicago.

BTAG:V CORREL

Yet another dittoing for Apa-Tech #6
from the disorganized ramblings of one
W. Skattington Higgins. I'm at 855 North
Drive, Apartment 1a, West Chicago, Ill. 60185. Do you know where your

SPRING 1985
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Suppose I skip the amenities and dive right into mailing comments.
There may be quite a lot.
Greg-- I have no major disagreements with your reading list, though
you might have added the Project Cyclops report to your technical
category.

Dole's Habitable Planets for Man is perhaps too much of a classic.
Many SF writers swear by it and use it creatively. A few use it in
fiction, however. I've seen certain numbers, while Dole gets by
waving his hands wildly in the air, quoted to three or four sig-
nificant figures. If you're gonna steal his ideas, at least at-
tempt to change assumptions slightly and calculate your own figures.
I suppose this is a case of what Heinlein called "filling out the
serial numbers."

Have you read the sequel-- Habitable Planets for Women? (But
as my mentor Joe Evans was fond of quoting, "Man" beats "Woman".)
(Obviously, Renée, William Patrick Typographer was old friend
of Greg's father. I think. Any relation to Biglet's grandfather,
Trespassers W? which was short for Trespassers Will, which was short
for Trespassers William.)

As to the mass driver, two power supplies are involved. Each
fixed driver coil has a big pulsed capacitor and assorted other
components. These can be charged to a high voltage any time be-
fore the shot, with stored energy 1/2 CV². A driver coil need
only be on for the fraction of a second when the projectile, or
"bucket", is in its neighborhood.

The bucket has two coils which must carry a DC current, for
the entire time it's inside the launcher. This is where the heavy
drain comes in, and why a superconducting bucket is such a good
idea. Auto batteries are in the habit of delivering many ampere-
hours in a short time, so fourteen of them were able to dish out 526 amps
to the MIT bucket coils. The crew managed with only four when
they dunked their bucket into liquid nitrogen before shoving it
into the mass driver. Not, I hasten to add, to make it supercon-
duct, but only to lower the resistivity by a factor of four or
so.

Valli-- For you and anybody else who may not have read much Niven:
Tales from Known Space is far from the best collection. Better to
start with Neutron Star. All the Myriad Ways is also a fine collec-
tion, though it contains no Known Space stories. World of Ptavvs
is I think, his best novel, with Ringworld, Note in God's Eye,
Ringworld Engineers, Gift from Earth, Protector, World Out of Time,
and The Magic Goes Away in rough order of my preference. Pardon
me--if I use the power underlined here, it'll slice the page in
half. Anyway, Lucifer's Hammer and Inferno, both collaborations
with Pournelle, sink right to the bottom of the list. [Sorry, Jerry.]

Will someone please tell me what the hell is good about van Vogt?

Rod-- I thought Ignatius Donnelly sank from sight (Yuk, yuk) a long
time ago. For a splendid guide to pseudoscience, read Martin Gard-
ner's curmudgeonly Fads & Fallacies in the Name of Science.

Rod (cont'd)-- You propose flooding Mars, electrolyzing your water, and letting the hydrogen escape into space, to explain the rivers and canyons on the planet. You'd better hold your breath and hope that nobody, anywhere on Mars, strikes a spark for several hundred thousand years at least. Otherwise the H_2 and O_2 floating around will combine dramatically, and all your work will be washed away. And, come to think of it, where did the oxygen go?

Mars is very near the asteroid belt, and has the deepest gravity well in that region. The capture rate for asteroids won't be too low.

I priced some radio-control stuff back in the early robot days. You neglect to mention that all that stuff is fiendishly expensive.

You're quite welcome to draw bandersnatch cartoons. They are so simple to draw that anybody at all ought to be able to do one.

Donna-- Nice cover. Don't feel you have to have something "intelligent" to write about. Are we all sercon fans here? You probably come across ideas all the time in reading or conversation which are worth mentioning, even briefly. Then you'll get mailing comments (like this one) and you can respond to them. Or use the ancient ploy which I see Rod has rediscovered: say some things so outrageous that everybody will have an MC for you. For a guy who's never been an apafan, Rod is certainly taking to it. Almost his natural element.

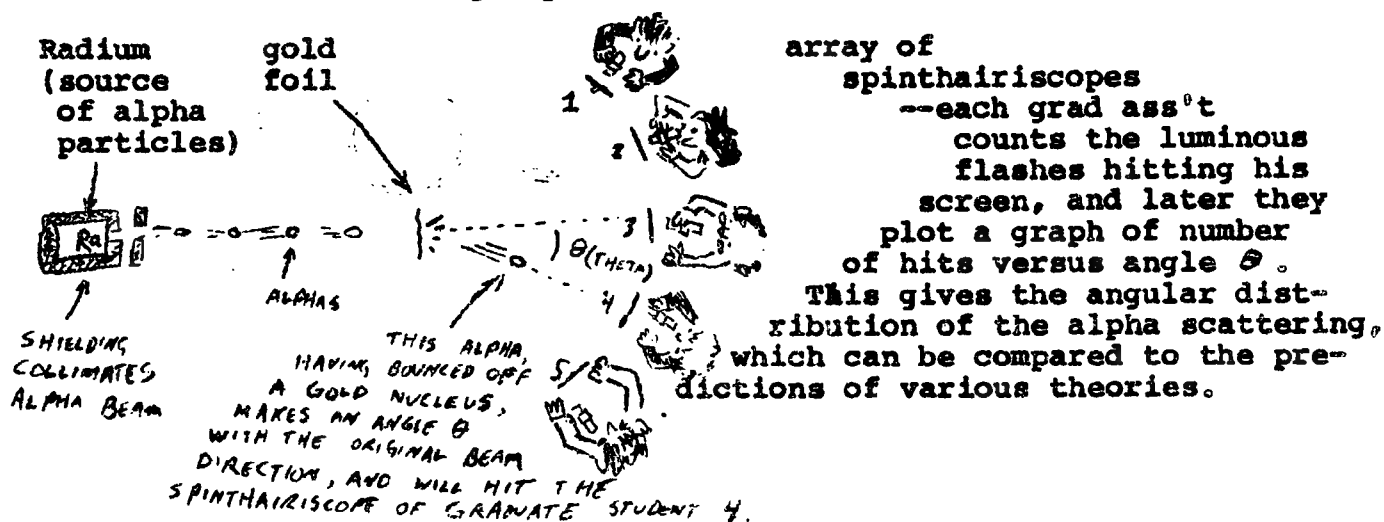
Doug-- I second the motion that we'd like to see more of Carol Schmidt. But her schedule hasn't exactly made it easy for her to get to cons or drop in on Chicago. Maybe we should make a pilgrimage to Columbus?

Perhaps BARRY could be persuaded to attend Whatcon.

It was good old I. Newton who said, "If I have seen further than other men, it is because I stood on the shoulders of giants."

Dick-- For more hot water at IsherCon, I wanted to repeat Count Rumford's experiments at the Bayerische Kanonenwerke, using the milling machine to bore holes in metal cylinders immersed in water. Tullio vetoed it after I calculated that it would have the capacity of about one fourth that of the water heater. How about the Power Dogs method?

A spinthairiscope consists of one zinc sulfide screen, one microscope, one dark room, and one graduate student (preferably British). Sir William Crookes invented it, and Ernest Rutherford employed it in his famous scattering experiment in the following arrangement:



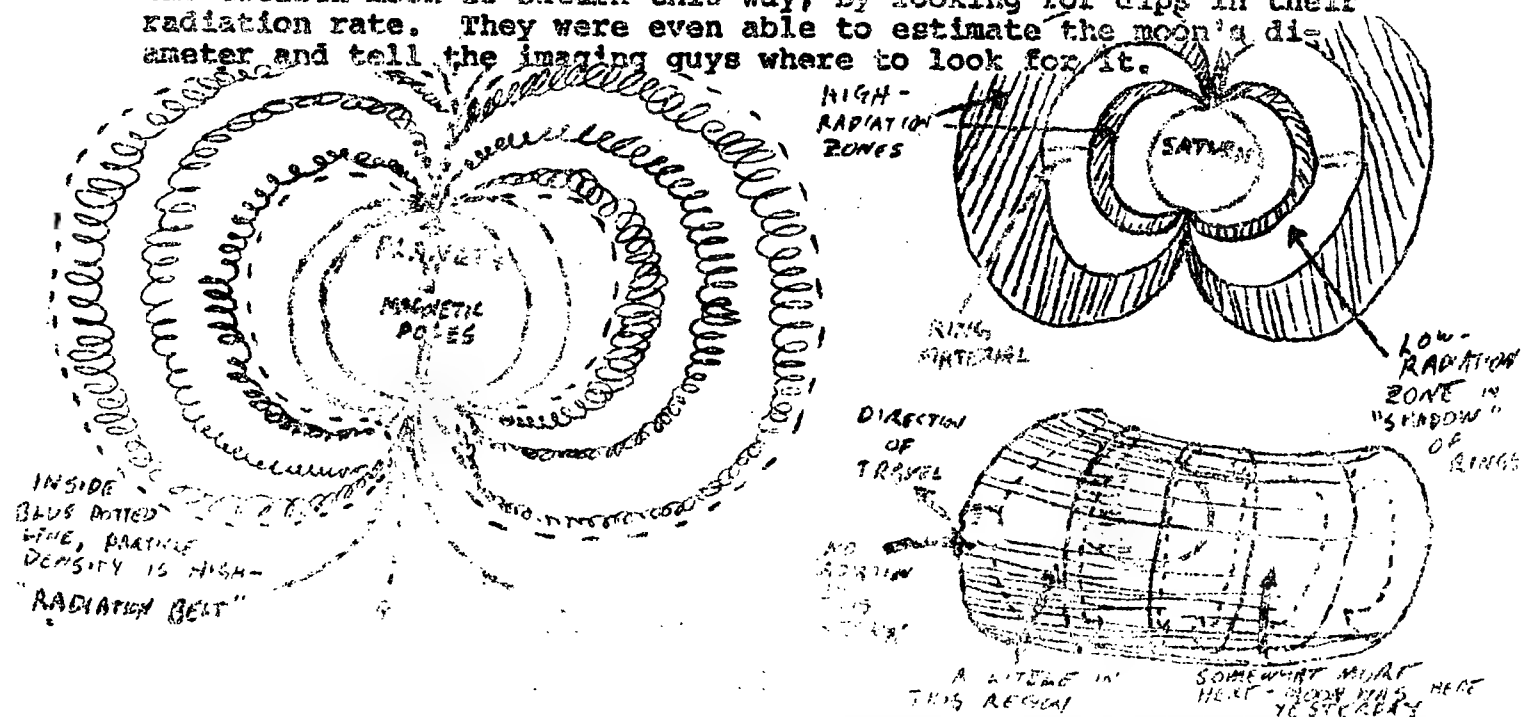
Flounder-- I don't really have to MC a one-shot, do I?

Bill L.-- The rings of Saturn don't affect the magnetic fields, but radiation belts are formed when high-energy particles get trapped in closed orbits in the "dipole" or bar-magnet-shaped field of a planet. Starting, let's say, at the north pole where the field lines are bunched close together, they spiral along the lines outward and south. In the plane of the equator they curve inward again, still moving south, and slowing down until they reach their southernmost point. Here the field lines are squashed close together again, and the particles are bent back by the strong field gradient to the north pole, where the same thing happens.

So the constant flux of cosmic ray particles keeps filling this region up, and the particles get trapped, so the radiation density becomes very high. (Presumably there are processes which remove particles from the radiation belt, maintaining an equilibrium. But at the risk of appearing as if I don't know Everything, I must admit that I don't know what they are, and I haven't looked it up.) In order to maintain the belt, though, the same particles must keep sliding between the north and south poles and back, over and over again. Right?

If you have a moon, or a fair density of ring material, moving through --no, let's say sitting still-- in the belt, it will absorb some or all of the particles whose paths intersect it. So at the radius of the rings, there is a gap in Saturn's radiation belt. If you fly by the planet with a Geiger counter, you will find a drop in the count rate as you cross this "shadow". The same is true for the region above and below any moon. So this would be the relatively "safe" region you speak of.

Now start your moon moving around the planet. There are no belt particles immediately above and below it, but just behind it in its orbit, some particles are beginning to fill in the gap in the area it just left. So each moon leaves a "wake" of slowly increasing radiation density. The extent of the wake depends upon the moon's speed around the planet, and upon the rate at which new particles can replace the ones which were removed when they were absorbed by the moon. The radiation team on Pioneer Ten located the twelfth moon of Saturn this way, by looking for dips in their radiation rate. They were even able to estimate the moon's diameter and tell the imaging guys where to look for it.



Keith-- I was right; neither of the Nobel prizewinners in Medicine, Allan Cormack (physicist) and Geoffrey Hounsfield (electrical engineer), has a PhD. nor an M.D. Our abstract discussion of the doctorate degree has suddenly taken on great relevance to you...

While I was never very gung-ho about getting The Big One, otherwise my story is pretty similar to yours. As you know, I have a satisfying job near a lot of my friends. I could probably make quite a bit more money working in industry and still do interesting work, but I'm enjoying the work environment at Fermilab more than I would the money. Maybe.

With your computer experience you will, I think, have your pick of geography, company, and project. Get plenty of resumes out, then sit back and wait for the offers to roll in. Satellite-building sounds excellent, and if they did it in Chicago I'd be tempted to go into it myself.

As for the draft, I infer from your comments that the electronic battlefield might reverse the ancient principle that war destroys a nation's most promising youth. The most intelligent and able draftees may not be on the front line, but behind a console beneath a bunker in Thailand. Or perhaps weapons systems will be so sophisticated that only the brightest can handle them; recall the Elite Conscript Act, from The Forever War.

Renee-- Nice con report. Is IsherCon technically a real con? What is a con, anyway? My rule of thumb is that you can call any fannish gathering a convention if there are more attendees than the first convention (1938? that's what I get for typing at work, away from all my reference books) when six New York fans journeyed to Philadelphia to spend a weekend with Milt Rothman's gang. Perhaps a rule about people traveling a long distance is necessary.

Tullio says we used only about a fifth of that big bottle of helium. We are looking into obtaining smaller, more portable bottles for con weekends-- probably twenty bucks' worth of He would last us two or three cons. Todd and Al may know of someplace in the U.P.

I like very much the notion you proposed ~~me~~ to me at Hoosiercon: a Tutorial Berserker where people could learn the rudiments of electronics, software, sewing, machining, ham radio, etc. during a weekend. I volunteer to teach guitar and ukelele lessons.

Also the movement to form a committee at Minicon to schedule summertime Berserker Weekends is probably a good one. Despite the fact that this idea runs contrary to our usual delightfully anarchistic way of doing things, and to our natural antibureaucratic leanings, there are a lot of inequities in the present system. I know that both you and George Ewing got screwed out of holding Berserkers last summer simply by not being quickest and/or loudest to announce; Todd and I, Jeff & Carol, and Cap'n Al won out.

You'd better consider all the people who want to throw one. So far George, Cathy Hudson, and Gretchen have all mentioned their desire to host one. Make sure you cover all the bases, or your committee may find a lot of techies sore at it.

Mike B.-- I am flattered and pleased to be chosen Whatcon's Absent Guest of Honor. You may be sure that I will make every effort not to attend. And I won't bring my uke, either.

Tell us more of the Big Microprocessors Project. Is that the logo of Trivial Systems on your page? the T looks like a Y.

I think the source of Asimov's ideas might be less than "from the beginning of recorded history"

Etsoin carfla-----live---

Gordon-- I sure hope February, March, and April have been better to you than December and January were. Sounds like you need a real vacation. Eagerly awaiting your next postmailing.

Jamie-- Congratulations to you and George Popa for whisking out your own issue of Pyro. Since GT has been dominated by Midwesterners since its inception, we seldom hear about life on the coasts or in the South. Maybe after a few Worldcons we'll be less isolated from each other. I know Tullio, Alex, and Renée are planning to be at Westercon this year; look them up at their huckster table. If you peer into the darker corners of the con, you may even spot Jim and Val Ransom, transplanted Midwesterners.

Other regional issues of PyroTechnics are in the works. Cap'n Al is sweating over a second Michigan Technics, number 24, but the project seems to be stalled indefinitely. We're putting out a Chicago issue, with Dick Smith as publisher and Doug van Dorn as editor. We have no tight deadline at present (having learned from the experiences of others) but I suppose you might expect to see it in your mailbox around the beginning of May.

I'd be interested in seeing photos of George's miniatures. Clyde Jones has also been building models for films since time immemorial. I build 'em for my own amusement-- some are favorites out of books, some are dreamed up from nowhere. Let me make a formal request; if George will send me small prints, I'll try to get them (and perhaps my own) in the Chicago Pyro or in one of Jeff's. Bill Leininger scared up a Xerox screen which should help to improve the reproduction quality.

There! Four and a half pages of mailing comments! Does that make me a true apafan? I suppose one does not reach true enlightenment until one is no longer tempted to put anything besides mailing comments in his zine...

[This machine I just switched to seems to have a different spacing between letters than the one I left five minutes ago, even though I'm using the same ball. Hm. I'm not going to monkey with it now.]

The big news this mailing is that WGN, Chicago's channel 9, has bought Gerry Anderson's Thunderbirds in its new syndication! Most of you have seen one or more of his marionette SF shows during the 1960's: Fireball XL5, about a spaceship, on NBC Saturday mornings; Supercar and Stingray, about a vehicle which flies/floats/dives anywhere and a submarine respectively, widely syndicated; and more obscure ones such as Captain Scarlet and Joe 90. As a kid I was nuts about these shows. Partly it was because there was damn little science fiction on TV to begin with, but most of the attraction lay in the heavy emphasis on hardware. Blinking lights, raging exhausts, beeping electronics, beautiful model shots-- this, dammit, is what television was for! The launch procedure for Supercar was like a religious ritual, and I knew every detail. I dreamed of building my own nuclear-powered vehicles to roam the world and have adventures.

Well, somehow I never lived in a city where they were showing Thunderbirds. From my point of view it was the pinnacle of Anderson's career. The puppets were more sophisticated and less grotesque. The stories were a full hour long. Best of all, more different models were employed than in any other show, so Nuts-and-Bolts Freaks were presented with a cornucopia of far-out rockets, VTOLs,

crawlers, hovercraft, and submarines to feed their dreams.

After Thunderbirds Anderson did a couple more shows with even fancier puppets, but they weren't widely shown in the U.S. About 1970 he began a series with live actors, UFO. It also featured a wide range of terrific models and would, if revived, probably compare favorably with much of the trash that has passed for SF on the tube in the last twenty years. But it wasn't really a very good show. It featured a secret organization defending the Earth against flying saucers with Moon-based interceptors, missile-launching tanks, and ~~some~~ (my personal favorite) a submarine-launched Mach 3 fighter.

Then, somehow, Gerry got Sir Lew Grade to give him seven or eight million bucks to produce another live-action show—Space:1999. The less said about it, the better, except to note that it only employed one model of spaceship, the infamous Eagle, and the occasional guest ships weren't enough to satisfy us old-time fans. A grumbling was heard around the globe: "He shoulda stuck with the puppets."

I've been rising at 6:30 AM a couple of times a week now. Having sought Thunderbirds for ten years now, it seems like a small enough price to pay for recovering a missing piece of my childhood. The premise is that a family runs a small outfit called International Rescue from a rocky island somewhere-or-other. With the aid of several hundred million dollars' worth of super-advanced vehicles, they perform daring rescues of just about anybody from just about anywhere. For reasons which are not clear to me, but which serve to move many of the plots, no outsiders are supposed to know where their base is or any of the secret details of their craft. It is even less clear how these operations are financed, or where the Thunderbirds vehicles came from in the first place. Presumably the family is rich, since they seem to enjoy rather a high standard of living. They do employ an engineer named "Brains" who is afflicted with a stutter. I guess we can assume that he had a hand in building all this stuff. Perhaps he studied under kindly old Professor Popkis, who built Supercar.

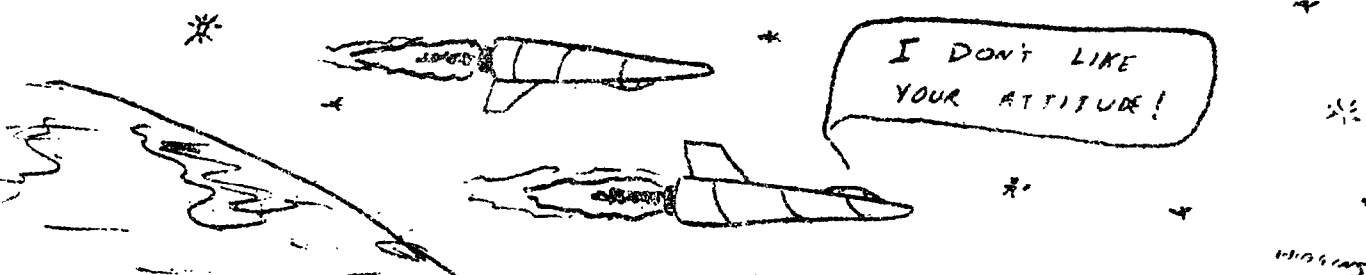
I won't go into the details of all the vehicles this time, but take my word that they're all a techie could desire. Especially if he were a puppet about one-third human size. Great ingenuity is exercised in the building of sets and props, so the marionettes are more interesting to watch than the bland crew of Moonbase Alpha. (Though I shuddered this summer at Archon when, in an old episode of Stingray, a sleepy puppet tried to yawn. He brought his hand to his mouth, and his lips parted—but behind them all we could see were clenched teeth...)

Half-hour pieces of episodes are shown Monday, Wednesday, and Friday on Channel Nine at 6:30 AM. If you're near Chicago, get up some morning and take a look. If not, keep an eye on your TV listings.

Renee and I took much glee in a line of Harlan Ellison's during the ERA/Iguanacon debate: "Trying to politicize science fiction fans is like trying to teach a paramacium to play jazz."

Has anyone noticed that one of the most popular new jazz groups is called Spinogyras? Could this be more than coincidence? (No.)

Bill L., Angel Inaley, Mary Lyn Skirvin, and I made an epoch-making journey to Houghton, Michigan March 28. Home of Chris Cloutier, Todd Johnson, Cap'n Al Doestar, and the rest of the Permanent Floating Riot Club, it was just as bizarre as advertised. But I'm running out of room, so I'll talk about it next time or in Pyro. Clear ether, and happy landings!



Wait! Put this down! Don't read it, or you'll leave

EYE TRACKS



all over it. Oh, well, I guess the damage is already done, so I'll tell you that this APA effort is being done, exclusively, by:
DOUG VAN DORN, 307 S. West Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126 (312)833-6714.

THE WHAT'S ALL THIS, THEN DEPT.: This is the Sunday night after HoosierCon, a convention I had despaired of never seeing. The story is, I'm still not working (Western Eclectic and others frapping out on me) and we are not, shall we say, possessed of tremendous capital resources at this time. But, last Wednesday, I got a call from Dick Smith, offering a deal I couldn't refuse: we could leave for South Bend Saturday morning and he would cover the room expenses if I would cover travel costs. It was a deal.

Gretchen immediately began working to perfect a pattern for small fire-lizard-like dragons and, to keep up the cover of not going, had to complete them by Friday afternoon to send along with Bill, Bill, Angel and Jerry. Not only did she finish them, but they all sold, one for the incredible price of \$30! (Considering they were all min bid at \$5, and the other two went for \$11 and \$14, that's fan-damn-tastic!)

So, in all, the weekend paid for itself (the third time that's happened, my hat's off to my pretty wife) and, although the con was a bit truncated, I think we got as much out of it as those who were there for the duration.

That's as much as I'll say on HoosierCon. Not because there isn't more to say (far from it!), but there will be a con report, to be written on this very typer later this evening, by the Sunday Night Supper Club. It will be for submission to APA-Tech, so you'll all hear about our humble opinions.

THINGIES THAT GO FLYING INTO THE NIGHT DEPT.: The two Voyager probes will reach Saturn this year (around Worldcon--shades of Viking at MAC) and next year. The return from these will be much greater than that of the Pioneer-Saturn mission (Pioneer 11). The Pioneer was just what its name implies, a pioneer into the realm of the Jovian system. It has been described as a "fields and particles" spacecraft, meant to find out some basic things about the space around Jupiter. That mother is HUGE, and puts out nearly as much heat and radiation on its own as it reflects. Before Pioneer 10, there was serious doubt as to whether a spacecraft could survive in the space around Jupiter, and the radiation field is so severe as to put to rest all those stories about men visiting the moons of Jupiter. They're too hot.

All this points out that Voyager is the next step, designed to find out a wide range of information about the planet. So, just as Voyager collected hundreds, possibly thousands of times more data on Jupiter than Pioneer, so will it collect so much more on Saturn than Pioneer did or ever could.

THINGIES--cont. from p. 1

One of the big pluses to expect from the Voyager encounters of Saturn will be ring geometry. In order to maximize the data return, Pioneer approached the planet and left the planet on the unlit side of the rings. This side is never seen from earth, since we almost always look from the direction of the sun, from Saturn's point of view. Since the rings weren't directly lit, all the pictures showed were ring material scattering light--thus making them a lot less impressive than they will seem to the superior Voyager cameras.

The next step in this daisy chain to the stars is the Galileo Jupiter orbiter, set for a 1984 launch, as two separate spacecraft, on the Shuttle. It was originally set for 1982, but launch slips and problems with the Shuttle's lift capability forced the delay. The two parts of the probe are an orbiter and a Jupiter entry probe. It will go into the Jovian atmosphere, sniffing and looking and, hopefully, taking pictures. If there's life anywhere else in this solar system, it's in those clouds, and that's one of the things the probe will be looking for.

Finally, to the point I started out to make (I think). There is now on the drawing boards a Saturn probe, based on the Galileo configuration. It would be launched in 1989, based on hardware developed for the Galileo mission, but there could be an important difference.

If the Saturn probe is launched via the normal means--given a chemical propellant kick past escape velocity--it will be able to deliver a basic Galileo-type probe to Saturn. If a new means of propulsion--solar electric--is developed, an orbiter, a cloud-entry probe and a Vikingesque soft lander, slated for a landing on Titan, will make it there. Either way, it will take eight years, due to planetary orbital geometry. (The Grand Tour arrangement is leaving us. Oh, Proxmire, how you screwed that one up for us....)

The reason the solar electric propulsion (SEP) makes such a difference is that it is the rocket sf has been predicting for decades. Simply, solar panels take in electricity, which is used to produce a veryveryveryvery low thrust ion drive. But the thrust would be constant over the eight years it would take to get there; thereby raising the payload weight immeasurably.

And Titan? Well, Titan happens to be the only body, with the exception of Venus, Earth and Mars, that has a terrestrial mass and an atmosphere. It's a rocky body and, if the atmosphere is composed properly, may have a livable temperature. It depends on how much greenhouse effect may be warming the surface. Answers to this and other important questions will be provided by Voyager.

As for the Shuttle, hope flourishes but realism insists that there may not be a launch this year. It seems there are more problems with the damn thermal tiles, which have been upgraded from mere thermal sheath to structural member of the spacecraft. The tiles, not the engines, are definitely the pacing item on the thing at the moment.

Back to SEP for a moment, the development of this drive is now a bit in doubt. It is needed for the proposed comet missions later this decade, to slowly fly by Halley's Comet and then rendezvous, and possibly soft dock, with Comet Temple II. Without the SEP, a ballistic flyby of Halley is planned, one that will collect a fraction of the data.

secret to
1/2-bch!

Some engineers say the SEP may not be ready in time for the mission, but it's beginning to look like we may never find out. Proxmire is at it again, and isn't being fought too hard by anyone, including our beloved President. The SEP new-start funding was cut in committee, and unless someone gets off his duff soon, may never get back in.

Now, I don't want to be accused of sounding too much like Jeff, but letting a congressman or senator know how you feel couldn't hurt, could it?

Oh well, enough preaching against the stupidity of the Congress. Leave that to those who are professionals at it.

ON THE HOME FRONT DEPT.: In a few days it will have been three full months that I've been staring at these walls, figuring out how to get myself a job. Having gone through the normal cycles of anger, depression, self-abasement and anticipation, I think I've found a middle ground. It's called constructive realism.

I know a little better now who I am and how I got to be this way, and I don't need the prospect of glamour and having my name on the front page of some newspaper to define myself. When I got into college, I was a theatre major, out to prove something to someone (myself, most likely). When I finally got it through my head that almost no one who gets a degree in theatre works very often and often starves for quite a while, I went into the only other thing I could do: writing. I became a journalist, and set out to prove (to myself, again) that I could succeed in that field.

Well, I did it. I proved that I can operate better than most as a working journalist. In the process, I found out something even more important: I really don't like it.

It's not that great to have a job you don't enjoy, especially one that takes up so much of the time you would like to spend on things other than work. After a steady diet of meetings every blessed Monday night, and usually at least one other meeting a week, at night, I started getting almost neurotically jealous of my off-work time. It's taken me quite a long time to realize that, and I'm still not over it.

Peer pressure and influence are awfully important, though, so a plan of action has presented itself. I no longer pretend that a career opportunity will come to me in a field I'm not trained in, so I'm going to get a mundane job, probably at a bookstore or somesuch, and take computer courses at night. In a couple three years I intend to have a job programming. One thing this period has convinced me of--I want to have some job security. There is a tremendous lack of programmers and analysts now, and in 20 years, it is predicted there will be 10 jobs for every programmer. That's the kind of job security I want.

So, money will be a bit tight for a time, but things will be a lot more copacetic for Elmhurst Fandom. But, if you see me at a con and I seem to be slipping a bit, just whisper "Captain Keller" in my ear and I should pick up. (And if you want to know what that means, just ask. I'm not shy about such questions.)

DOWN THE AISLE DEPT.: At HoosierCon, one and all got a little surprise when reading the notation on Chris Cloutier's namebadge: "Cecile's fiancee."

For some reason, I have heard about as many negative comments on this as positive. I think there is a general anti-marriage sentiment in fandom, or at least in that part of fandom I associate with.

I wonder if this is because of bad experiences some fen have had in marriage, whether people really don't believe in marriage (or that it has positive aspects) or if there's something more.

You see, part of being a fan, in many cases, is retaining an almost childlike sense of wonder. Is it possible that this carries with it a childish desire to avoid certain types of responsibilities--like marriage?

I don't mean to generalize too much, and realize that many have very legitimate reasons for not being married, not wanting to be married and not approving of marriage. I'm not saying people against Chris' engagement are immature and foolish, and I know they all wish him well, no matter what they think of the idea personally. But.....it seems to make a little sense to me. Whaddya think?

It's been more than three pages of what was starting out as a four-page zine, and still no mailing comments. Well, then, I guess two things are in order. First, I'm revising the length of this to about six (?) pages, and I'm starting my....

MAILING COMMENTS

555 TIMES: As you will be able to tell from my answer to the ballot, I would definitely not like to see the name changed to APA-RATUS. As an alternative, I would like to point out that the general term for the object anything is orbiting is the apsis. Thus, we have the terms periapsis and apoapsis, because, past perigee and perilune, terms like perimars or perijove get a little awkward.

Since apsis starts out with ap, there should be something that could be done with it. Maybe APA-Apsis? It's original, and I think it's catchy. It's certainly more original than APA-Gee, and APA-GT is not only hard to write on a typer, it doesn't necessarily describe what the zine is about.

I assure you, Renee, I shall not collate the thing anymore. I just figured it would save you some time, but, remember, I'm still learning this game.

QUINTESENTIAL SINGULARITY: Ah, Greg, someone else is doing film reviews. Thanks. I really like the logo--great.

As to CUTE ROBOTS--remember when Star Wars came out and everyone wondered if that was really Roddy McDowall's voice as C-3PO? Well, it was really Anthony Daniels, as we all know now, but--hold on to your hats (or cookies or whatever)--VINCENT's voice in Black Hole IS Roddy McDowall. What else, from Disney? I think they have a reserve activation clause on him, Dean Jones and Annette Funicello.

No question, ST-TMP is much better in Dolby. It's best, though, in Dolby and 70 mm, the way I saw it a 11 a.m. Dec. 7, the first show open to the general public anywhere in the greater metropolitan Chicago area.

On Empire Strikes Back, remember Lucas isn't directing this one, but is only executive producer. Let's hope it keeps up the same up-beat flavor as the original.

Ah, that battery commercial storyboard is great. Now, how about, "When you need your stasis field to last through the end of the universe...."

DR. GONZO'S: More film reviews! Will my rapture never cease?! But seriously, Scotty never says the engines canna take it in those exact words and Bones never has the chance to say "He's dead, Jim," so you know there will have to be another one. Without a sequel, how will we ever find out what all those doodads, like the plastic navels, really are?

Glad to see you've discovered the world of Niven's known space. But don't come down on Niven too hard for the way Matt Keller uses his new-found power at the end of the book. If you just got the power of complete control over people and you had only been laid twice, after twenty-some years of sexual frustration, how would you react? It's sort of like giving a 15-year-old boy the power of invisibility--the first place he'll head is the girl's locker room.

You know I'm glad to see you and Dick are doing so well together. Just remember that "Goddamn Hoskis" is a phrase of endearment, and you should do just fine.

I hate to say this, but your zine was almost unreadable again, when you combine the poor repro with the margin problem. You know you're welcome to use the typer here anytime you like, for more than just mass-made pieces of minac.

TRANSPORTER TOPICS: Thanks for the sources. Gretchen has been after me for months to put the demand "SOURCES!!!!!" into one of these. Maybe she'll be satisfied with this.

The Martian terraforming idea isn't bad, but is very iffy. We don't yet know what the process was that brought water in mass quantities to that red dust-bowl, and screwing around with it could conceivably do drastic things. Also, remember the soil chemistry, if it doesn't contain life, is extremely exotic, so an breathable atmosphere may not stay that way for very long, or--as Niven has done to another planet--the surface may just catch fire and keep going until the oxygen is exhausted. We just don't know, and that's one of the best reasons I know for going there and finding out.

The local theatre pulled Meteor out the day it was supposed to start because the owner previewed it and saw what kind of tripe he was expected to show. I don't know if you got a chance to see it, but I guarantee you, it was really beyond the pits.

OUTER DARKNESS: Having a little problem with deadlines? You might try what I do--write your zine right after you get the last one. Then, everything you say in response to the last APA is fresh, closer to your first reactions. Also, what's in these things doesn't have to have news value that spoils over a month. If it did, it wouldn't make any sense to save any of them. Besides, if your piece is a little older by the time you get the APA, you can read it after forgetting what it was like to write it, thereby allowing yourself to evaluate it as if it was someone else's--a valuable tool in improving writing skills I picked up on a while back.

CORONA: Dick, as I've said before and will say again, an electronic APA is great for those with computer access, and leaves us poor slobs with no real access out in the cold. Besides, could we have such fun Sunday nights with an electronic? I don't know, but I'm sure it would be different.

I have a longer speech to make on the subject, but I think I'll wait for Bill L.'s zine so I can address the PLATO question more directly.

As for you and Valli, see my comments on Dr. Gonzo's.

DEMON 2K: OK, now we get into the heart of the matter. An electronic APA just isn't an APA, Bill, it's an entirely different breed of cat. It's a lot less of a rigid medium, the lag time can be as short as a few minutes in some cases, and the interactions between the participants changes drastically. Consider: you can check a notefile every day, read a comment on your comment, make another comment, and so on. It's a lot more of an interactive thing than this is. Electronicizing an APA completely removes all vestiges of what that acronym stands for--you no longer have an amateur press association. You have a means of communication that is comparable to written telephone with a long time between comments. And, don't forget, I like to save these things to look at. Literature can be and is an art form, while reducing it to commonized words on a CRT or, if you got the dough, a printout, all the same type style on all the same paper, removes the art, leaving only the message. Remember what McLuan (sp?) said about the medium.

What I like about APAing, apart from the chance to do some therapeutic writing, is the diversity, not only of writing style, but of medium style. I enjoy it when someone can throw in a little artwork, and I wouldn't have missed that mass driver Sears Die-Hard ad for anything. All that could be lost with the advent of electronic APAs.

Getting to the correlary, there's nothing wrong with notefiles, either. As a means of communication (informal, of course), it's great. It allows the participants to say what they want to in writing, which can be a really good idea. The time it takes to formulate and write a sentence is invariably longer than the time it takes to formulate and say a sentence, and in the process of writing, formulation continues, allowing you to refine your thought. It's nearly impossible to blurt out the wrong thing on a typewriter because the thought wasn't quite formulated yet. (It is, however, possible to blurt out the wrong letters, and my bottle of liquid paper has been nearly empty for a year now.)

I like the thoughts on communications, even though they could lead one down von Daniken's primrose path ("It is obvious that early man must have heard ancient astronauts speaking to develop language of his own..." etc.) What's a lot more likely is that man was faced with a situation in which he needed to communicate better to survive, and started using onomatopoea to describe things by what they sound like. Maybe that's the first step, and no other animal (excluding cetaceans) with enough intelligence to do that ever ran into the survival-enforced need to do it. Still, it's an interesting thing to think about.

See
Self
Distract

Well, there goes my hope to keep this to six pages. In a little while, you may see a line proclaiming this page does not exist, too.

TWO SHOT: A little obvious, but good, dirty fun nonetheless.

ROSES TO DEADEN: Who're calling a clod, Bill? Certainly not any of us good, decent, hard-working APA contributors.

Finally, Hynek is pushing some of the right buttons! I've thought for years the best way to get scientific analysis of the UFO phenomenon accepted would be to push the physical aspects research. After all, what scientist could resist identifying the positive remains of the Bandersnatch who Fell to Earth?

I like some of your Hugo suggestions, though I'm not into suggesting a lot myself. As to Roadmarks, I'm afraid I'm not an old Zelazny fan, as you are, and can't approach the book on the level of "Is the old Roger back?" I never really am in the forefront when it comes to being an old fan of anyone or anything; I just managed to get through the Dune trilogy a month ago.

CHARMED SEA: Keith, it isn't so bad. I know any failure really hurts, and it does no good to draw comparisons ("Clean your plate! Children are starving in China!" et al), but you at least will have a master's degree in a field that offers satisfying work. The fear of "the real world" passes quickly enough when the mind-set gets adjusted, although my first week on any job usually hears me say "I'm gonna quit tomorrow" several times.

And, of course, there's always the possibility that what you lack actually stems from your lack of experience outside academia. I know the professional student, working in such a stilted system for so long, can sometimes start to think in a stilted fashion--which is a plus in some things but a minus in others. So, go on out and face the world. It shouldn't bite--and if it does, you'd be surprised at how easy and how effective it is to bite back.

AROUND THE WORLD: Any particular significance to the 800 days, or did you just choose it for the nice flow?

Good to hear your point of view of Ishercon. I can certainly assure you (which I realized to my dismay that I didn't last time) that it was a really great weekend, and a good time was had by all. Or at least by me.

It's also nice to hear the Mylar Helium Special got as far as it did. I always knew this group would go places one way or another, though I'm not sure I want to admit to it if the nicely conductive mylar did any nasties to the power station.

As to your thoughts on marriage and gafiation, it's so true. How many people gafiate for the same reasons--settling somewhere new, finding a new job, acquainting oneself with the "real world"--and nothing much is said, except "I wonder whatever happened to...?" When this happens concurrently with marriage, though, it's easy for some people, especially those with a point to make, to point to the institution itself as the cause. I think we but need to look at all the happily (or unhappily, makes no difference) married couples who are very active fans to see that it does work.

Thanks for agreeing with my point on emotional effects of films. I want to hastily point out that a film doesn't have to raise the spirits to be good or well-made, but, by the same token, it doesn't have to be a good or well-made film to make you feel good. I guess that's why I get strange looks from some fans when I so readily admit I liked Superman and Star Wars so much. Certain people, who seem to have taken on Harlan Ellison as their atheistic Ghod, take great joy in telling me I couldn't have enjoyed this or that because of its obvious flaws. I've taken that trip myself, on occasion. But, in college, I had a film teacher who showed us a couple of Frank Capra movies at the beginning and told us to watch the film in a totally uncritical manner, because that's what they were made for. Some films work only on the emotional level and won't stand scrutiny on any other. Thanks to that teacher, I can watch a movie on a purely emotional level and enjoy the hell out of it. Later is the time to put on the critic's cap and pick out the flaws.

By the way, I find this has been very beneficial to me as a film reviewer, since the average moviegoer, being of average intelligence, takes in everything on an emotional level. By removing the critical function long enough to watch something and react the way the common, salt-of-the-earth moron might, I can more easily spot what will and won't be popular.

MUBETA: Mike, I agree Asimov wasn't satirizing religion in Foundation, but neither was he presenting anything remotely like what has happened in the past. He sees religion as a force that can topple other major social forces, but doesn't seem to see behind what that force has been throughout the ages.

Asimov's Foundationers know the religion is a sham, to keep the peasants in line. Not only that, they know the real reasons for what the religion explains as workings of the Galactic Spirit. In times past, when religion has been a mass force in the workings of man, it has been through the control of the beliefs of the masses by one who held similar beliefs. Remember, the Holy Roman Empire came about when the Emperor became Christian, not when the Emperor decided to invent Christianity to keep the Empire in line. The masses took on the Emperor's special processed version of the faith, it's true--but it sprang of his own faith, which had been influenced by centuries of change in the Middle East and the Germanic countries.

So, Asimov has one man create, in 50 years, a movement as powerful as Christianity or as Mohammedism, based on pure, complete and abiding faith. These people who embraced the religion could still remember the Empire, knew of it through their parents, and knew that the techie marvels they saw weren't the creation of a divine Emperor but of scientists. One generation is not enough time for that memory to die away suitably for this religion to gain a mass appeal.

Look at the Empire. As their society decays, the people with the technology are plied with power and mystic awareness by the people--but I'm sure a tech-man on Siwenna couldn't lead the masses on a holy technological jihad against a house fly, much less strong sociological force.

All of which is admittedly wide of the distinction you were making about satire vs. played straight, but still relevant and, I hope, interesting.

No more paper. See y'all next time around!

TALES

6666

FROM THE

6

66666

CHARMED SEA

6

6

6666

(C) 1980 by Keith Thorne

This issue created from recycled raw verbiage,
courtesy of Another Half-baked Production Publications.

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Monday-Wednesday 514 W. High St.
 Urbana, Illinois 61801
 (217) 344-4718

Thursday-Sunday Muon Lab
 Fermilab
 (312) 840-3613

As I predicted, this past month has been very hectic for me. As you might have guessed from my address list, I am now commuting regularly to Fermilab. This has meant that I spend a lot of time packing, unpacking or living out of a suitcase. I returned Monday night (the 31st), giving me just enough time to do my wash, pub my zine and get my hair cut before the expedition to MiniCon. Thursday night meetings, when I can make them, are the last vestige of what used to pass for my social life. My experiment at Camp Fermi is finally getting underway, so now all the things necessary to set up the experiment to take data are now being done in typical last-minute fashion. This involves such incomprehensibles as trigger logic, timing gates, chamber efficiencies, and beam tuning. My contribution, aside from the usual sh*t work, is maintaining an LSI-11 and creating software for it when needed. We mostly use it for talking to IEEE standard data acquisition systems known as CAMAC crates. Someday I will figure out interrupts, I hope. As to my job hunt, there is nothing much to report, as I haven't heard from the companies I interviewed and/or applied to. I did submit my resume to Fermilab, so I have at least one shot at the Midwest. My appointment runs through the summer, so the time pressure on me is not as great as it could be. I apologize for causing any undo concern with my ranting last issue. It was at least somewhat cathartic for me. Let me take this opportunity to thank all of the Chicago fen who expressed their hope that I would stay in Chicago. My ego really appreciated those expressions of support. What would I do without you?

MAILING HAILINGS

Renee - Enjoyed your report on IsherCon II, especially as I was there only a short time.

*but what
Lore says
read*
Bill H. - I don't feel qualified to participate in the Hugo debate, as I haven't even read TITAN or JEM. An interesting fact is that, according to LOCUS, there were more SF novels published last year than all SF short fiction combined. Thus it stands to reason that a short story or novella class entry should have a better chance as a matter of simple probability. As for Star Trek, somehow I missed the entire Trekkie scene and have difficulty understanding this fanaticism.

*wrong
guess*
Two shot - Fess up, Dick, I recognize your style here! There you go trying to perpetuate the myth of the techie as a social inept. Aren't things bad enough as it is!

*I haven't
seen it yet
yet*
Bill L. - See body of my issue for Hitchhiker's Guide info. A very nice issue. As regards your fashion remarks, let me say that 'on-the-job' is definitely one of the places where fashion can be important, whether we admit or not. To me, arguments about narrow vs. wide labels and double vs. single breasted show a lack of nerve and of style. Maybe the whole problem is that shaving ones torso is not feasible or desirable. Exposed hirsute male skin appears barbaric and unsophisticated while female skin, with the help of makeup, is to many, especially photographers, an art form, an epitome of beauty.

Fan mail - Straaaaaange!

Dick - You are right about business women and suits. Gad! I hate conformity, especially for no real reason except some dumb tradition. People should be respected whether they are in a three-piece or jeans. Tailored suits are a way of showing ones economic status, since someone who has mase it can afford enough of them to wear a fresh one every day.

Doug - Hope you find a new job ASAP!

Donna - Certainly! Write about anything! It's your paper! Jumping from thought to thought merely gives the reader's mind some badly-needed exercise. Of course, a few lead-ins do help bridge the chasms.

R. E. Smith - RAEBNC

Valli - All I want is a decent bowl of homemade New England clam chowder, like the ones back at the Olde Worlde in East Lansing. Maybe Berghoff's on Fridays? You can stroke my velour anytime, especially right down by my ego. If I wanted the correct techie attitude. I would have become a physicist... ..Ooops! I think I better reconsider that.

There must be an error in my logic somewhere.....

Greg - Thanks for the byline. I am starting to get the feeling that I am one of the few people remaining who could spend a whole week in a nice quiet room without going crazy. My major uses for music are through headphones to keep me awake and for occasional entertainment. I am definitely glad that I intentionally missed THE BLACK HOLE.

555 - Renee, why didn't you use a two-sided copier for my zine? Was one not available at that price?

(As you may have guessed, I did this scan starting at the back)

BIAS FROM THE DIAS

An article on science fiction by Charles Nicol (former editor of Science Fiction Studies) appeared recently in The Saturday Review. In it, he states that SF is "the only popular genre to be implicitly or explicitly religious". This did not sit very well with me at first. If he had said speculative or philosophical, I might have agreed, but religious? I am currently not a "religious" person, nor have I really ever been one. The idea of faith pretty much revolts me. Then I realized that religion is above all a search for purpose, for the powers-that-be. I feel that the usefulness of exploring speculative situations is to try to define that which is human, that which is constant in us. My interest in philosophy is on the grand all-encompassing scale, rather than the individual scale. Probably because of my physics inclination, or may be it is the other way around, I desire the fundamental truths of life. Contemporary fiction most often deals, if at all, with some very specific social or individual problem. This is all well and good, but there is also a place for the general. Is there some connection between this ability with Science Fiction to probe, to discover and the "sense of wonder" we so often try to attain?

On a slightly different note, I pose the following problem: How do you instill ethical behavior into children without a religious foundation for it? Plato in his "Republic" postulated the use of a great myth to create his ideal society, a fallacy that the first two generations would have to maintain. Is there a better way? Is suitable, or "moral" behavior possible without faith? Ayn Rand's "enlightened self-interest" is not sufficient.

NOVEL HOVEL

The Union Bookstore here has a source of British import science fiction and a few weeks ago they received copies of THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY!!!!!! It has the same cover design as the album. They ran out quickly, but more

are on order. The last page of the book has information on how to order the record. The info is:

Hitchhiker's Guide Double LP £ 6.99 (inc. 50p for
to the Galaxy Megadodo Publications postage and
 P.O. Box 101A handling)
 Surbiton, Surrey KT6 5AX

A PLEA

As some of you know, I am going to be head gopher of WhatCon II, and so I am in charge of getting the gophers. Thus I hereby announce that I NEED GOPHERS!!!!!!! Alice Insley is head of the Art Show. She needs people. We also need people for security. So if you, or any of your friends, especially if they know me or Alice, wish to work for the convention, they should contact me or Alice at our address in Urbana. Or send it along with your registration. All I can promise is that if funds are available, some form of remuneration will be made.

TOPICAL TOPICS

The March 22, 1980 issue of Science News contained an article on a paper presented at the APS (American Physical Society) meeting in Chicago that held that all music has a structure based on $1/f$ noise and fractals.

Both Science News and Time ran articles detailing the lobbying effort on the Space Treaty, in a generally favorable tone. President Carter has apparently appointed a committee to take a second look at the treaty.

PERS PERUSE

Its about the end of the line for this issue of my zine. First a few words about how I prepared this. I am sitting at a TEC Series 500 DATA-SCREEN terminal which is attached to the DEC-10 on the top floor of the physics dept. I am using TECO (Ugh!) to edit this and RUNOFF to format it. Hard copy is available both from a high-speed DECwriter and a terminal with a Selectric mechanism. As I type here, I am facing a relic of a computer called a CSX-1. Built sometime in the early sixties it is made up totally of discretes, i.e. transistors, diodes, etc. Until a year ago it was used to control a film scanning system known as DOLLY. We are selling the DOLLY system and trying to find some place i.e. a museum for the CSX. Old technology never dies, it just takes up more space!

THE RIGHT TO CARRY LASERS IS THE RIGHT TO BE FREE!!!

Speaking as a security person of 2 or 3 years, I found it both alarming and sad that the committee of Minicon were so mis-informed. For those of you who weren't there, Minicon published in their first issue of THE BOZO BUS TRIBUNE that there weren't any lasers allowed, no hand guns (blasters), and insisted that all blades, plex or otherwise were peace-bonded, (tied into the sheath). Now, I can understand the blades; I've had more than one run in with people who thought it was their right to just whip out live steel any time they wanted. But Proni blasters, or HeNe Lasers are not what I would consider nearly as lethal or potentially dangerous. Annoying, perhaps. Helium neon lasers, which are the type that most techie sorts carry, are well within the safety margin for public handling. Angel Insley and myself are considering doing a special disclaimer to send to all conventions explaining that what they think is dangerous is in reality a glorified flashlight. I will grant that some of the homemade prop weapons look more contemporarily realistic than the Proni models but I hardly see the necessity of making such a decree without provable facts to back up such fear. I can provide proof that even getting hit in the eye is not as dreadful as it is made out to be. I myself have been accidentally hit in excess of 20 or 30 times, square in the retinas, and I will gladly assume a strong position that I have suffered no real ill effects. In fact, I have often compared it to being caught with a red camera flash. My own eyes usually boast enough sense to close when exterior light gets to be too much. This is a fairly dependable guide. However, let me say that the number of times I've been zapped was due to my own foolishness. Most of the techies I'm associated with, who own lasers, have taken extensive care to safeguard their creations either from harm or causing same. It truly worries me that folks are somewhat reluctant to find out the truth...which is easily obtained by just walking up to nearly any techie and politely asking. If all else fails, call me at 414-421-6537, I will happily clear the air. Like I said, reasonable precaution is all that's needed and a touch of common sense. If you see a techie carrying his weapons either slung over his shoulder or hung at his hip, PLEASE!!! ask before you touch! It is considered very uncouth to walk up behind someone and say "Gee, does this really work?" and calmly pull the trigger. This will not only annoy the owner of the gun, but can also irritate those nearby if someone is accidentally hit.

MLS:
recount
Anthon
disaster
last year

MARY LYNN SKIRVIN ~

The Runny's Mubetan
Circa April 4, 1980

That commentary on Asimov not writing satirical came back from the poisoned pen of my group leader [teacher's Assistant] with so many... vehement... comments, all I can say is wow!

Alright, so it is satire (at least until I find out from the source). I had no idea the definition of satire was as encompassing as it seems to be. Imagine, setting one's lines compared to the drooling spray of words scattered by the Scientologists, of all people.

It is recorded in my log as a 'learning experience.'

I don't know how this Mubetan is going to be printed, as my printer is completely inoperative with an electronic FLU. I myself had a five day belt of nausea, with two wasted aidterms promptly afterward. My condolences go to all the other people that contracted an illness this year.

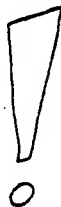
No, nesatorw on APARATUS. APATECH!

Gres (Ruffa) did a wonderful job creating the Black Hole. Harlan Ellison had very harsh words for Star Trek, nearly a furlong in length, in a recent FUTURE magazine.

BSG, well well well. We had to but wait one year and five episodes or thereabouts for Larson to blatantly screw Close Encounters. Fuck him and all that back him; he hasn't got a creative original bone in his little toe; where his brains seem to be.

NEXT APA:

THE GLOW IN
THE DARK
INDEX



There seems, according to a Chicago Tribune of recent printing, that a fierce battle is going to be conducted for supremacy in the videodisk industry. IBM and company seem to be aiming away from mass mass production of videodisk recorders and players, aiming their sterling and blue sights on the heavy users -- in-

dustrial, commercial, educational, and computerized markets -- with their laser tech units. CBS and RCA have joined victrolas and are out to blast a lion's share with cheap players for home use. The RCA/CBS units will be based on a capacitantly charged platter and a needle shaped differently from phonograph styli. Zenith wants everyone to buy their laser-based players, which are vastly more flexible than the CBS/RCA models, and apparently (**HEARSAY**) produce a better picture and sound. The Zenith model is also aimed at the mass market, but the masses and the players are a 200% increase in cost, as the projections indicate.

I think CBS/RCA will put out and enormous library of masses. I also think the cheapness of the players will cause them to sell like hotcakes, regardless of the engineering of the Zenith model. Most people will not look to the day when their soon to be enormous collections of masses are worth something in resale value, and the CBS/RCA versions will not last as long as the INDESTRUCTIBLE, ARMORED, RESELLABLE Zenith masses. I don't care what kind of propaganda RCA/CBS generates, their masses will wear out. They have a stylus floating on an exposed surface, with the stylus grinding away at the protective surface, assuming there is a protective surface over the signal. Wouldn't that beat all, CBS and RCA outderring the signals of masses they produce? Planned Obsolescence? Naw, not RCA and CBS. Nuuuuuu.....

I don't imagine that RCA and CBS are making an audio only version of their videodisk format. Can you imagine carrying 4' long raw RCA audiodisks into your car or boat and playing them? With that floating stylus? NO. Yet the laser Zenith version can do that, with less of a problem forseen. The Zenith model still requires the beam moving over a surface and following a groove, and I don't know if a mechanism like that can work flawlessly in a car. It would be nice. The RCA/CBS version is right out.

The Zenith version does have a flaw. The laser may wear out after a period of use or nonuse, unless they are not using helium neon lasers or any laser with a gas in a tube that can leak. Oh well. Canv they build a semiconductor laser for it?

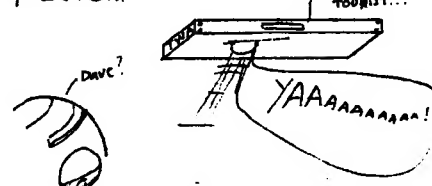
Gres, your list of recordings joined the others I have accumulated over the months. We thank you.

Wendy Carlos has recompiled the Brandenburg Concertos for synthesizer. It is a two record album. The signals are cleaner than the old, original works she did when she was a he. I'm not that pleased with this work, she should be doing original compositions and selling those. She probably has a hell of a stack of them by now.

Velli!

...who are you? You were an orange pattern of dots not to long ago, and suddenly you appear in Fleshtone! Yesh, deep invisorations trauma...I have been a distant exile from the land of the Reader and the relentless elevated trains for four years, and thou speaketh as if I've known you for a few months, at least. I think we have met four to six times. My memory isn't, it has failed. I have to set outa Urblanda.

incomprehensible cartoons
presents...



Is William Colsher going Kabas [GAFIATE in Esperanto] from the APA? Sish.

Transporter topics: What? (heh)

OUTER DARKNESS NUMBAH TWO:
Oh, DONNA, Donna, ...don't mention it.

DousVan: I don't think Exxon is considering leaving the oil business for a while, no way.

Smitty: I like to point fingers, if I have nothings else to do.

I have reservations about TECO. It seems like a model text editor (and preprocessor) (and command language) to develop better systems from. I don't like command strings that aren't closer to English than Forth or assembler. I haven't found a computer/operating system I could completely agree with, including RT/11, Unix, and their Teco or Teco-similar editors. Nice guy systems are unusual AND fast.

I agree with you regarding Velli's hardcore, I find it difficult to read. I can't wait to see Chicago Pyro!

Fan Mail From Some Flounder floored me. Gas sss sss sss. A high point in the APA, it is intricate and amusing.

the Prospect Hts. Kid: Tnx for the address of the record version of the Hitch hiker's Guide. the book, we found around Mar 10 or so in the local bookstore, and which, by the way, promptly sold out, ends when our intrepid crew is about to go to a restaurant. Damnation!

Your comment about electrochromic displays was interesting. I think I read another news release about it an indefinite period of time ago, but it didn't

seem to me to be what you describe. Hmmm, I may backtrack my footsteps and find that release.

In Mining Engineering 302, The Politics of Minerals, we are learning who are the have nots and who are the haves in terms of natural resources. For example, the USSR does not import very many raw materials, whereas the United States imports enormous amounts of materials. The US seems to import a majority of several key resources. The nonsense about being self-sufficient in oil consumption is considered hilarious, considering the OTHER raw stuff we import. Were Canada to become hostile, new copper would vanish. The Vietnam conflict appears to be in part a panic about US oil interests.

The USSR steel production is larger than the US, and Japan has more productive steel factories than either the US and the USSR, although they don't make as much.

The US exports food and technology. If we neglect the RandD departments [NASA, for example], and are trying to fight cheap labor [Zenith vs. any Japanese company], our power base will decline, as it has been doing. The US, amazingly enough, still has a very productive working force.

The TWO SHOT was different, very different.

OR, EVEN
HERE!

Skeffington is a fresh voice talking about printed SF. GREAT! I WILL read Godel Escher and Bach (Hardrock, Coco, and Joe?) (Haldermann, Erlichman, Mitchell and Dean?) (Paine Webber?) (Merrill Lunch?) (John, Paul, George, and Ringo!) (That's enuf...)

Yr. obt. svt...? what a reference...

I liked Brave New World on NBC, despite the frantic innuendoes implicated by Chicago Tribune critic Larry Kart that the televised version was to be avoided. It was faithful; thick on the intended camp, but the Shakespeare was excellent, and camp is always too thick. On the other hand, the endings of The Martian Chronicles was awful, and They could have done better work on the special effects if they tried.

--- ! ! ! ---

ACCORDING TO STARSHIP (Also) Magazine, I believe from a letter by some SF author in residence at Sri Lanka (I can't find the issue at this moment to check). Stanley Kubrick is interested in finding a good story to do a GOOD science fiction film with. One assumes the story has to have something to do with science fiction as well. I

think it would be rather nice if we bantered titles about until we came up with three or five (or four, for that matter) existing titles we could present to Kubrick by mail. It would be nifty if General Technics had something to do with the next Kubrick blockbuster... Alice suggests 'Kurie' by Poul Anderson, where one of the characters is made of fire and is telepathic.

For Kubrick, I do not suggest long stories like the Amber series, Dune, LOTR, or the Foundation trilogy, even though the Foundation trilogy is as tempting as hell. It should be of suitable length for Kubrick to have enough breathing space to play with. Kubrick obviously likes to do his own thing. So, start playing with your trivia databanks and evolve a list of suitable stories to suggest in the next almighty APATECH!

App - to - authors?

- OR Here ☐ 6

Never create a large computer site without false floors (That is, a site with a large computer).

???

I am contemplating putting together a computer math book with lots of examples and many pieces of artwork. I am rather tired of the imaginative as Whalebone textbooks and professors I had to endure to find out what finite state machines were and, for example, how to reduce the complexity of a finite state machine by converting it into an equivalent machine with fewer states... right, draw material. It isn't stuff I consider worth blowing a grade point average on, but it is necessary and DULL. Thus, the Computer Math book. I don't intend for it to be incredibly sappy, as a FORTRAN PRIMER by some east coast professor, or the calculus primer with all the dreadful cartoons in it integrated into the information (You have to read the cartoons to learn the calculus. Sheesh). If the material gets boring, the pictures will draw your interest. Even if the book is sitting on a shelf, out of sight, the artwork will snap a George O. Smith relay in your memory, your hand will engage and straddle onto the book, your eyes will resist the artwork, and finally, your mind will get into gear and read the text. It depends on how well I can organize the material into outline form, and of course, how well I can present the information on paper (and how many examples [with answers] are provided -- Alice). It may be another one of those three year plans that will

be forgotten in the third month, but it is something to write about.

Is this formatting of the text better, with the hyphens inserted? I have to go through the text and stick them in by hand, but the results seem to be better.

your Hey!!
ad could
be HERE!
ONLY \$12,000⁰⁰

Continuing my ONE-SHOT

A man stood on a hill that was within a large plot of land that he owned, enjoying the morning rise of the sun, when he noticed a bright slint of light coming from a small bundle of trees to the west. The man squinted, but couldn't see what was causing the reflection. He didn't remember anything among the trees that would do that, so he started to investigate.

The wind was light, warm, and constant. The blue sky had a few small, white pillows whose altitudes were unquestionably high. The sun was over the eastern horizon, orange-yellow and large. The man enjoyed the summer mornings there, and smoke nearly every morning to watch the sun.

As he was about to walk among the trees, another man walked out. The owner was startled as six metal globes followed him. The globes were each a meter in diameter and hovered at eye-level above the ground. They moved as the other man did. Each globe had an small ornate design painted on its surface.

"Hello," said the owner, smiling. "Nice globes you have there."

"Good morning, sir. Yes, they are handy, and also tame. I don't suppose you could tell me the RANDEX number of wonder sun, could you?" said the man.

"My name is Gelder, Robert Gelder," said the owner, shaking hands, with the visitor. "No, I don't believe I know what a RANDEX number is."

"I'm lost," said the visitor. "The information would have told me where in this galaxy I was. I'll have to have my friends here triangulate my location," said the man. Silently, a globe rose rapidly into the sky and disappeared.

"Oh, my name is Robert Home. Is this your land I'm trespassing on?"

"Yes, but you and your globes are welcome. I've never met a space-going traveller before. You are from another planet?"

Robert frowned. "I would be

happy to know that. I am still in trainings, though. They won't tell me."

"Trainings?"

"They call it trainings, I call it torture."

"They?"

"That is another good question. I'm not quite certain of that, either."

"Who they are?"

"Right."

Gelder raised his eyebrows, breathed deeply, put his hands in his pockets, and looked at the ground. He then looked up. "When I hear you, your lips don't move."

"I am not speaking, only thinking. If you don't know how this is done, then one of my slobes must be relaying my communications to you directly. I didn't know that could be done. Is this indeed what is happening?"

A deep voice said, "Yes, Robert. I am causing the communications to be possible."

"Good, it would have been difficult otherwise. Why are there humans on this planet? Don't you know there is a war on?" said Home.

Gelder breathed deeply, his face again registering surprise. "No, things have been peaceful here. No spaceships, no conquering armies, or anything else like that. What war do you speak of?"

Home said, "Well, it appears that for no reasonable reason at all several separate factions of violet life are making it their business to hunt and destroy red life. The more red you are, the more likely the violet folk are likely to blast you away. Nobody has been able to determine the reason. This planet is a violently unusual case. All the planets in this galaxy have been wiped clean of red life except this one. Can you tell me why?"

Gelder swallowed. "No...no, I don't think I could."

"My slobes tell me you are organic, and that there is a large organic civilization here. Such is impossible under normal circumstances."

"Uh...well..."

"Do you have space travel?"

"Uh, no, not yet..."

"That might be the reason. It doesn't make any sense, but then again, neither does the fact that the violet machines are trying to wipe us out. They have been doing a magnificent job. No telltale hints of red life exist on any planet in this galaxy -- except THIS one. You'll have to excuse me if I am suspicious."

"Of what?" said Gelder.

"Anything," said Home. "Why does this verdant world still live? A trap? Violet things are INTELLIGENT suckers." At any rate, if you lift a ship, you might be discovered and become one large carbon deposit. I'm going to leave one of my globes, one which contains a few tera-

bits of technical information stored in it. You will need it. We have determined that the violet life have been keeping away from this planet, but we haven't figured out why. When you are done with it, send it back to me. If I survive, I'll be somewhere in the universe, and this slobe will find me if it kills it."

"Thanks loads," said a slobe.

"Ah, the obvious volunteer."

Plum, I'm transferring your ownership to this gentleman. See that his interests are preserved, won't you?"

"Of course, Bob. Mr. Gelder, our first thing will be to learn how to disguise the tremendous amounts of high energy industrial development we will be engaging. For instance, the surface of the planet will look like this, but underneath, this civilization will be building things."

"Uh...sure, I guess," said Gelder.

"Plum, Oranse thinks the RANDEX number is JJ8-998-DC10,90-80-70-1175-20."

"Yipe," said Plum.

"Huh?" said Robert.

"That would put us four lights from the Orsor Center."

"What is an Orsor Center?" said Robert?

"You don't want to know."

"Try me."

"The center of activity for Orsor, a violet and hostile community."

"Huh?"

"Yes, they have detected us."

"Can we fight them off?"

"We can run and expect to survive, but they're just as bad as that monstrosity you ran into not to long ago."

"The metal sun?"

"Nasty. We had better leave."

"Haaaaa," said Robert. "We are so near their home base, huh. Plum, forget what I told you about staying here. I don't want to upset anything."

Gelder said, "What? Your not leaving the slobe here?"

"No, they might be looking for such a mechanism to tell them what our state of the art is. This place is too wierd."

With that, a blue field enveloped Robert and he and his slobes flew up and out of the planet's atmosphere.

Gelder shrugged. He figured they would be back.

← example of atypical oversight.

ARGH!